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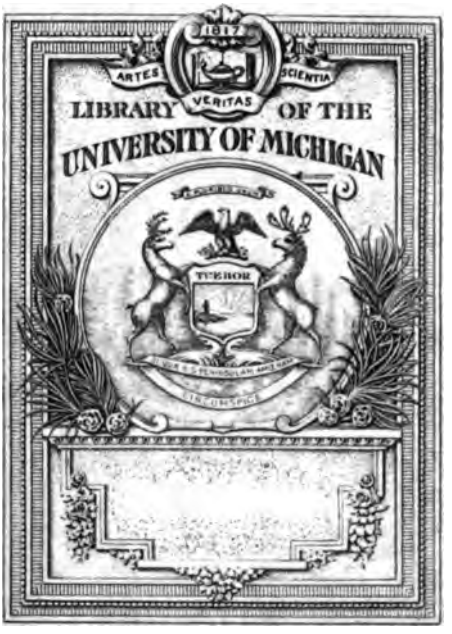
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WILD JUSTICE

"'Jack,' she said suddenly, 'you come along with us.'"

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WILD JUSTICE

STORIES OF THE SOUTH SEAS

BY
LLOYD OSBOURNE
AUTHOR OF "BABY BULLET"

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK :: MCMXXI

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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PREFACE

Deep in every heart there seems to be a longing for a more primitive existence; and though in practice it is often an illusion, the South Seas lend themselves better to such dreams than any other part of the world. There are fewer races more attractive than the Polynesians. Frank, winning, gay and extraordinarily well-mannered, the higher types are often remarkably good-looking, and scarcely darker than Southern Europeans. Some aspects of their life are truly poetic. Half naked, with flowers in their hair, and just sufficient work to keep them in superb physical condition, they have an almost unlimited leisure to share with the wayfarer in their midst. And dirt, that greatest of all human barriers, is nonexistent. No people are cleaner; none have so intense a personal self-respect. One wonders sometimes whether it is not the white man who is the savage, and these in some ways his superiors.

I went to the Pacific when I was a boy of twenty, remaining there till I was twenty-eight. For two years I sailed in various ships, visiting not only all the principal groups, but stopping at many a lost little paradise like Manihiki, Nieue or Gente Hermosa, which lie so lonely and apart that the rare stranger is greeted with open arms. Then, settled

in Samoa, I learned the language as only the very young can learn it, and incidentally had a small part in the civil wars of that period. I was brought into intimate contact with many powerful chiefs, and became so wholly a Samoan that I once barely escaped assassination. I certainly have some claim to know South Sea life from the inside—from the native's side—and this must be my excuse for the present volume.

That my stories should deal so often with the loves of white men and brown women is inevitable. The white man and the brown girl—that is the oldest story in the South Seas and the newest. The children of the sun are very easygoing; their standards are not our standards; they live for the moment, and love as lightly. It is often the white man who suffers, and not the maid with the sparkling eyes and radiant smile. He may take regrets away with him; perhaps one of those inner wounds that never heal, while she marries a native missionary and lives happily ever afterwards. Polynesians always live happily ever afterwards, no matter what happens.

Yet do not think I am disparaging them. They probably have as much to teach us as we them. Courtesy, kindliness, good humor, a charming acceptance of life, and if the need comes for it an intrepid courage, all these, and more, are theirs. As I see the faces of my old friends through the mist I feel an undying affection for them. I shared their lives, their secrets, their happy days and their tragic days "in the diamond morning of long ago."

I was the confidant in many a runaway match; was the writer of war epistles that the bearer was directed to eat if pursuit grew too hot; I had a little domain of my own where my word was law—an "out-island" village, living in a perpetual feud with its neighbors. Was this really myself—this tall youth in the whale-tooth necklace and girded tappa marching with his brother chiefs in stately procession? Incredible—yet it was. Was it I whose hand was kissed by this stalwart warrior whom I see flinging himself from his horse and running towards me with the sun glinting on his cartridge-belt? Incredible—yet it was. Was it really I, at the helm of that boat, the leader of twenty young men who were to play cricket by day and dance by night, halfway round Upolu? Incredible—yet it was.

"Ina o mulumuluina o'u vae i le suasusu; na faapunaia mai foi e le papa tafe suauu mo a'u."

My publishers have been encouraged to reissue the present volume, enlarged by the addition of several new tales. Whatever their demerits may be, my stories are at least true to a picturesque and little known life that is fast passing away.

LLOYD OSBOURNE

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THE RENEGADE

I

It was two o'clock in the afternoon, and from her uneasy anchorage in the pass the German man-of-war struck the time, four bells. Overhead the sun shone fiercely through a mist of fire; below, the bay gave back a dancing glare; on the outer reef the long breakers foamed and tumbled, white as far as the eye could reach. From his perch beneath the bows of the *Northern Light* a sailor, paint brush in hand, was slowly wearing out the day—a brown-bearded, straight-nosed, handsome man of thirty, his red shirt open to the waist, his bare arms stained with the drippings of his brush. Astride of his plank, which hung suspended in midair by a block and tackle at either end, the seaman faced the task that seemed to have no end. For a week he had been at it, patch by patch, working his way round the bark, while the bells had struck on the man-of-war and the sun had risen and set.

As he swept his brush across the blistered wall in front of him, he wondered moodily whether fate had nothing more in store for him than this. Was he to finish as he had begun, a common sailor, doing

forever what others bade him?—painting other people's ships, pulling other people's ropes, clinging at night on other people's yards to take in other people's sails, facing tempests and squalls, reefs, lee shores, and all the vicissitudes of the deep—for others! He laid down the brush beside him, and in a somber reverie looked toward Apia. His eyes scarcely took in the bigger buildings that were dotted here and there round the circumference of the beach: the stone cathedral, the great yellow warehouses of the Firm, the two hotels, the consulates, churches, and stores. What attracted him, what held him in a sort of spell, were the lesser roofs showing through the green of trees and gardens, the tiny cottages on the outskirts of the town, or others still farther back, scattered and solitary on the wooded hills. Was he, then, never to possess a house of his own nor a yard of earth? Was the sea, the accursed sea, to claim him till he died? What had he done, he asked himself, that others drew all the prizes and left him but the blanks —that they should stay ashore and prosper—that they should marry and have children round them, while he drudged at sea alone? Those traders, clerks, saloon-keepers, those mechanics, carpenters, shipwrights, smiths, and stevedores, how he envied them! envied their houses, their wives, their children, their gardens, their soft and comfortable lives, everything that made them so different from

himself; he, the outcast, with no home but his musty bunk; they, the poorest, kings beside him.

It was the sea, he said to himself—the sea, that took all and gave nothing; the sea, mother of all injustice and misery; the sea, whose service was to tie oneself to the devil's tail and whisk forever about the world, sweating in doldrums, freezing in snow squalls, hanging on to lashing yards, blinded, soaked, benumbed, the gale above, death below. And yet even here there were some, no better indeed than he, who grasped the meager prizes that even the sea itself could not withhold; prizes that he could never hope to touch—the command of ships, the right to tread the quarter-deck, the handle to one's name. How did they do it, these favored ones of fortune? How did Hansen, that stinking Dutchman, ever rise to be the master of the *Northern Light*?—and that swine Bates, the mate, who already had the promise of a ship?—and Knight, the second mate, a boy but twenty-two, yet whose foot was even now on the upward ladder.

"Jack Wilson," said the sailor to himself, "Jack Wilson, you're a fool!"

Having several times delivered himself of this sentiment, always with an increasing heartiness of self-contempt, he slapped on some more paint and began to whistle. But the whistle died away again, for a little house was peeping through the trees at him, and he remembered how he had seen it from

the road, embowered in flowers, with the river flowing at its foot, a cool, snug, inviting little house, with green blinds, a pigeon cote, and a flight of steps descending to the bathing pool. How happy, no doubt, that fellar that owned it—a fellar with a regular job; a wife, maybe, and kids to swing in that there contraption under the mango; a fellar, as like as not, no better than himself; and yet——!

"Jack," he said huskily to himself, "how the hell have you missed it all?"

"Women and drink," came the answer. "Women and drink, Jack, my boy."

In the course of his long and wandering life how often had he been paid off; how often had he felt his pockets heavy with the gold so arduously toiled for; how often had he vowed to himself that this time he would keep it! And had he kept it? Never!

There had been windfalls, too; money that had come easily; double handfuls of money that he had tossed in the air like a child, to see it glitter. Sixteen hundred dollars from a lucky whaling cruise; seven hundred dollars, his share for salvaging the derelict steamer *Shore Ditch*; sixty-six pounds eight and fourpence that the passengers had raised for him when he saved the girl at Durban—that, and a gold medal, and a fancy certificate with the British and American flags intertwined. That medal! It had gone for a round of drinks and

five dollars for a wench. And the fancy certificate! Thunder! he had left it on the *Huascar* when he had taken leg-bail of the Chilanean navy.

"Women and drink, Jack Wilson!"

That's where it has gone, every dollar of it. To the sharks and bloodsuckers of seaport towns; to the tawdry sisterhood that spun their nets for Jack ashore; to those women that wheedled the seaman's last cent, and laughed to see him starving in the streets. It was for these he worked, then! It was for these he was even this minute painting the bloody bark; for rumsellers and harlots! He repeated the words to himself as he looked at his torn nails and blackened hands. For these—by God, for these! He felt within himself the welling of a great resolution, of a great revolt. He would reform. He would save his money. He would live straight. When they were paid off at Portland there should be two hundred dollars coming to him —two hundred dollars, more or less. He would put it in the bank, and get a shakedown in one of them model lodging houses. He would turn in at night with "Jesus, lover of my soul" in worsted work above his blessed head, and in the morning he would plank down his fifteen cents and begin the day with gospel tea. He would be a man! Yes, sirree, a man! Not a hog!

Then in his mind's eye he saw himself rolling down the street, a girl on either arm, the gaslights

dancing in his tipsy head. He would meet a shipmate and drop in somewhere for a drink; another shipmate and another drink; and then, the party growing as it went, a general adjournment to one of them hurdy-gurdies. Here they would dance and drink and sing and whoop it up like hell, till—till— Yes, that's what would happen. That's what always happened. Them good resolutions always ended that way—in smoke. He had made them, man and boy, these fourteen years. He would make them, he supposed, until the day he died. And keep them? No; he was a hog; he would go on like a hog; he would die a hog—a durned, low, dirty, contemptible hog!

He spat in the water to emphasize his self-disgust, cursed the infernal sun, and then, dipping into the pot again, continued his job.

Turning round to rest his arms, he perceived, beneath the deep shade of the Matautu shore, the first sign of animation in that sleepy settlement. A crowd of natives were straggling out to a whaleboat that was apparently being made ready for sea. Men and girls were wading to it, with baskets of food, kegs of beef, a tin of biscuit, and a capacious chest. A couple of children bailed frantically in the stern sheets, while a shrill old woman slid over the gunwale with a live pig in her arms. Strange packages of *tapa* cloth were carried out; bundles of mats, paddles, guns, a tin of kerosene, a huge

stone for an anchor, a water demijohn, more pigs, a baby, and a parrakeet in a bamboo cage. These were all thrown in, and stored with noisy good-humor and a dozen different readjustments. The baby, in turn, was given the bow, the stern, the center, as though nothing would satisfy it. A pig broke loose and was hilariously recaptured. A dejected, thin person, somewhat past middle years, in what seemed no costume but his native skin, retired shoreward with the parrakeet. An old chief, his head white with lime, after a prolonged nose-rubbing with those on shore, marched out to the boat, carrying an umbrella above his stately head. There were more farewells in shallow water, more running to and fro; a brief reappearance of the undecided parrakeet. The young men took their places at the thwarts, the old chief settled the tiller on the rudder head, the women, girls, and children crowded in wherever they could, and then, amid shouts and cheers, the paddles dipped and the boat moved slowly seaward.

Wilson watched it all with sullen envy. How was it that these brown savages were free, and he barnacled to a slab-sided bark? Was he not a white man, and their superior? Did he not look down at them from the heights of the world's ruling race, kindly, tolerantly, contemptuously, as one does on children? And yet who had the best of it, by God? Listen to the dip of the paddles; hear the

mellow chorus that times the rowers' strokes; not a care on board, not a face that was not smiling! His white superiority! They might have it! His lonely and toiling life! What fool among them would exchange with him? His wages? Look at *them!* They had none and wanted none; and as like as not they were putting to sea without a dollar among the crowd. Civilization—hell! He would give all his share of it for a place in that there boat, to drive a paddle with the rest of them; to be, what he wished to God he had been born, a durned Kanaka!

The whaleboat drew swiftly toward him as though to go beneath the bark on her way to the pass. The paddles leaped to a rousing song and crashed in unison on the slopping gunwales. Dip, swish, bang! and then the accentuated thunder of forty voices, the men's hoarse and straining, the women's rich, falsetto, and musical. In the stern the old chief swayed with every rush of the boat, one sinewy hand clinched on the tiller, the other enfolding a little child. In the bow a handsome boy stood erect and graceful, throwing a rifle in the air and dancing to the song of his comrades. Dip, swish, bang! On they came with an increasing roar, the white water splashing under their bow.

Wilson dropped his brush and looked on with open mouth. Great Cæsar! he knew that old fel-

lar in the stern. He had smoked pipes with him in the Samoa house by the bridge. And that girl there, who was waving and shaking her hand to him, that was little Fetuao, the daughter, who used to look at him so shyly and laugh when she met his eyes; little Fetuao, that he had given the dominoes to, and that dress from the Dutch firm, and them beads! Fetuao! Wasn't she pretty as she stood there in the boat calling to him; so slim and straight, with her splendid hair flying in the wind, and her brown bosom open to the sun! Pretty! My God, she was a spanking beauty, that girl!

The boat came to a stop beneath him; the paddles backed, and Wilson, with some embarrassment, received the stare of the whole party below.

"Poor white mans work all time!" exclaimed Fetuao, standing on a thwart to raise her head to the level of his foot.

"Like hell!" said Jack.

"Kanaka more better," said the girl.

"A damn sight!" agreed Jack.

"Jack," said Fetuao, "I go home now, and never see you no more. Good-by, Jack!"

She raised her little hand, which the sailor clasped in his big one. Her tender, troubled eyes met his own; her mouth quivered; her fingers tightened on his palm.

"Jack," she said suddenly, "you come along us, Jack."

"Do you mean it, puss?" he said eagerly. "Do you mean it?"

"Oh, Jack, you come, too," she pleaded.

"You come—that's good!" cried the old chief.

Jack, in a dream, looked above him and met the sour glances of Hansen and Bates, whom the noise had brought to the ship's rail; then he looked below into the girlish face upraised to his. For better or worse, his resolution was taken. They might keep his chest; they might keep his wages; their stinking ship might sink or swim for all he cared. They were welcome to what Jack Wilson left behind him, for Jack Wilson at last was FREE! He dropped lightly into the boat beside Fetuao, and with one arm around her naked waist he shouted to the natives to shove off.

"*Fo'e!*" cried the chief, and the paddles moved again.

Above their heads the astounded captain clutched the arm of the astounded mate, and pointed wildly after the deserter.

"— —!" exclaimed Hansen.

"The — — — —!" roared Bates.

II

Jack landed in Oa Bay, the possessor, except for the clothes upon his back, of nothing but his

rugged health, his stout heart, and a determination to make good his footing with his new friends. He remembered drawing apart from the others, as the welcoming throng came down to greet them in the dusk, forlornly struggling with his embarrassment and the penetrating sense of his own helplessness and isolation. Would he ever forget, standing there as he did, unremarked, solitary, shivering in his rags, the soft hand that felt through the darkness for his own, the voice so gentle, low, and sweet that whispered to him, "Come, Jack, you my white mans now!"

This was the beginning of Jack's new life. He became a member of the chief's family, sleeping with the others at night on the outspread mats, and taking his share, by day, of all the work and play of the little Samoan village. He weeded *taro,* he carried stones for the building of the new church, he helped to lay out nets, he speared fish, he played cricket and *ta ti'a.* By nature neither an idler nor a shirk, he was consumed, besides, with a desire to repay the kindness and hospitality of his hosts; and the old chief, his friend from the start, now became his captain, to whom he rendered the unquestioning obedience of a seaman. And old Faalelei, whose loose authority was often disregarded by his own subjects, delighted in the possession of this stalwart white, so willing, so eager, so ingenious in the mending of boats and nets—

a man to whom the mechanism of a gun had no secrets, and in whose hands a single hatchet became a tool chest.

Living thus among the only mild, courteous, and refined people he had ever known, Jack insensibly altered and improved. His loud voice grew softer, his boisterous laugh less explosive, and his rough ways gave place to a clumsy imitation of Samoan good manners. Little by little the uncouth sailor patterned himself on the model of his new friends, and he, whose every second word had been an oath, whose only repartee a blow, now set himself to learn the most ceremonious language in the world, and the only one, perhaps, in which one cannot swear!

And Fetuao? When he had first taken up his abode in Faalelei's house he had never doubted, seeing the girl's extravagant affection for him, and knowing the laxity of the native people, that it would not be long before he might form with her one of those irregular connections so common in the islands; and, indeed, it grew daily more plain to him that he had but to ask to have. But Jack, not a little to his own astonishment, and stirred by undreamed-of instincts and undreamed-of scruples, put the idea from him with a hesitation he could hardly explain to himself. In his wicked and lawless past he had known every kind of woman but a good woman; he had seen, in a

thousand water-side dives, every variety of feminine degradation and feminine shame, and had sounded in his time all the squalid depths of sailor vice. With the memory of these unspeakable contrasts, Fetuao's freshness, purity, and beauty shone with a sort of angelic brightness. No, by God, she should never come to harm through him; and, clenching his huge hands together, he would repeat these words to himself when he sometimes felt his resolution falter. For the sailor, who never until then had known a modest woman, who had starved his whole life long for what his money could never buy, whose heart at thirty was as virgin as a boy's, now found himself moved by a sublime passion for the only creature that had ever loved him.

For she did love him; of that, indeed, he had never the need to reassure himself; and in the knowledge of her love he became, almost in spite of himself, a better man. In her girlish self-abandonment Fetuao lacked the artifices which older women would have used; she never thought to guard herself, or to coquette with him. At night, as they walked hand in hand about the village, or sat close together on some log or boat, she would take his arm and draw it around her; she would lay her head against his breast; she would press herself so close to him that he could hear her beating heart. There was much of the

mother in her love for him. He was her great baby, to be caressed, kissed, crooned over, to be petted and encouraged. Her tender laughter was always in his ears; she corrected him as she might a child, with a sweet seriousness, and an implication that his shame was hers whenever he blundered in Samoan etiquette; she prompted him and pushed him through scenes of trying formality, and drilled him assiduously in politeness.

In the moonlight, when they were alone together, she taught him how to receive the *'ava* cup; how to spill the libation to the gods; how to invoke a proper blessing on the company. She taught him how to say "*O susunga, lau susunga fo'i,*" on entering a strange house; how to pull the mat over his knee to express his fictitious dependence; how to join in the chorus of "*Maliu mai, susu mai*" when others entered after him; how, indeed, to comport himself everywhere with the finished courtesy of a Samoan chief.

Thus the bright days passed, and months melted into months, and still Jack remained an inmate of Faalelei's household. At first he had accepted this strange life as a sort of holiday, never doubting but that, in the end, he must turn his back on these pleasant people, and see, from a dizzy yard-arm, their exquisite island sink forever behind him. The place thus possessed for him the charm of something he was destined soon to lose, and he

clung to it as a man clings to his fading youth, with a sense that it is slipping from him. He sighed as he thought of the forecastle that he knew somewhere awaited him; how he would recall those still nights in Oa when he would be roused by the boatswain's handspike on the hatch, and the hoarse cry of "All hands on deck!"

One day, when he was out in Faalelei's boat, an accident occurred that came very near to being the end of Jack. They were pursuing a school of bonito, and Pulu, the chief's brother, was standing in the bow with a stick of dynamite and was in the nick of letting it fly when it exploded prematurely in his hand. Pulu was killed, the rickety old boat parted and sank, and Jack, with his shoulder laid open to the bone, was towed in by a neighboring canoe, and carried up to the house. They laid him on the floor, pale and groaning, while the children ran out screaming for Fetuao. She came in like a whirlwind, still wet from the river, and threw herself on her knees beside him. With passionate imperiousness she made the rest of the household wait upon her bidding as she busied herself in stanching the flow of blood and in picking the splinters from the wound. Jack knew how wont she was, in common with all Samoans, to shrink from disagreeable sights. It touched him to see how love had conquered her repugnance; nor could he resist a smile when she began

to tear her little wardrobe into bandages, those chemises and *lavalavas* that she used to iron under the trees, and put away with such care into the camphor-wood chest with the bell lock.

For the better part of a fortnight Jack lay where they had placed him on the mats, undergoing, with intermissions of fever and delirium, the tedious stages of convalescence. Fetuao seemed never to leave him, attending to his wants, brushing away the flies, feeding and washing him with an anxious solemnity that at times almost awed the sailor. Her brilliant eyes, as black and limpid as some wild animal's, watched him with an unceasing stare. He often wondered what was passing in her graceful head as he lay looking up at her, too weak to speak, the drowsy hours succeeding one another in an unbroken silence. Once, when he ran his hand over his face and recollected with a pang how old and ugly he must seem to her, she had understood the sigh that expressed his own self-disgust, and had bent over and kissed him on the lips. From that moment his love for her deepened into an emotion transcending anything he had ever felt before. He saw now that to separate himself from her would be to break both their hearts; that, for good or evil, he was hers and she his; that fate had indeed joined them forever.

When at last he grew strong enough to walk,

he went with her across to the native pastor's house, where together they stood up before the Rev. Tavita Singua and were married. This was the prelude to another and more binding ceremony before the American Consul in Apia, whither they both went in a canoe borrowed from Faalelei. The official books were withdrawn from the safe and the thirty-six Americans in Samoa were increased by two new names: "Jack Wilson, aged thirty-one, birthplace Bath, Me., occupation seaman, present residence Oa Bay; and Fetuao Wilson, supposed to be seventeen, daughter of Faalelei, chief of Oa Bay, his lawful wife." (See Consular Marriage Record, p. 18.)

As he stood there before the consul, painfully conscious of his bare feet, of his unkempt and ragged appearance, of the contrast between himself and that benignant official, he timidly brought up the subject of the fee. No doubt there is some kind of damage, he said, and might he leave this ring—his mother's wedding ring—in pawn until he might earn a little money and square the matter? The consul took the ring, looked at it a moment without a word, and then in a rough, friendly way seized Fetuao's hand and slipped it on her finger.

"I think it belongs here," he said.

"But the fee," said Jack.

"Oh, damn the fee!" said the consul.

With that he went into an inner office and returned with a sheepish air, as of a man about to do something he was ashamed of.

"Here's ten dollars," he said. "Take it; it's a wedding present, you know. I never married anybody before."

Jack refused the gift a little ungraciously, though his voice trembled in doing so.

"Have a drink, then?" said the consul.

"No, I thank you, sir," Jack blurted out.

Embarrassment in a cloud descended on all three. The consul, like the worthy fellow he was, wished to do something for these waifs, and his eyes roved about the big, hot room in search of he knew not what. Jack and Fetuao, no less ill at ease, stood close together and waited submissively. Finally, noticing the new boat flag lying on his desk, the consul took it up in both his hands. "Wilson," he said oratorically, "this is my flag, and your flag, and it is now Mrs. Wilson's flag, for I've made her as good an American as the pair of us. Take it along with you, and if you have children, bring them up to love and honor Old Glory as we do, and teach them at your knee what it stands for—freedom, justice, and equal rights for every man born under it. And if there should ever be any trouble here—war, riot, or any little unpleasantness—just hoist it above your house, and its bright folds will protect you as though the

whole U-nited States army lay in a mighty camp around you!"

Jack took the flag respectfully, much impressed by the consul's speech, and tremendously pleased, besides, that Fetuao should see that an American, even a common, low-down American seaman like himself, counted for something in the official world. Would a Britisher, or one of those stinking Dutchmen, have acted like this counsul did? *His* counsul, by God!—and his breast heaved with gratitude and patriotic fervor. Afterwards, when Fetuao and he ate their lunch under a tree, he spread out the consul's gift on the ground beside him, and the words freedom, justice, and equal rights boomed sonorously in his ears. To Fetuao, in her simplicity, the bunting appeared a sort of sanction or certificate of their civil marriage; and when she returned home she explained that it was all settled, the *faamasino* having written their names in the book and given them the *fua Ameleke!*

III

Three years passed. Jack rubbed his eyes and wondered what had become of them; and he read the answer to his question in his coffee bushes, now breast high and crimson with fruit, in his trel-

lised vanilla already so exacting and so profitable, in his sturdy breadfruit trees thickening with every rain, in the patches of bananas, *taro*, yams, *'ava*, egg-plant, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and sour-sops that were set out so trimly in the plantation his ax had won from the primeval forest. His house, too, had drawn not a little on his capital—his capital of strength, skill, and perseverance—but he grudged neither time nor labor in making it the best in Oa. For a house is an important matter to a family man, even if it weren't a paying thing like vanillar, nor capable of helping a fellar along like a cow or a boat. It paid you back in its own way—a mighty good way, too—and it grew to be a part of you, like your wife, if you weren't a poor, lone, seafaring slob without one.

Of course, it wasn't much of a house, being a sort of beehive-shaped concern with a thatched roof a foot thick and open all round the sides when the cocoanut curtains was hysted. But when these were pulled down at night, and you were a-setting in one of your own home-made chairs with your wife on your knee, the night breeze rustling overhead and the breakers moaning a mile away on the outer reef, it made you sort of feel like things had come right at last, and that for two cents you'd plank right down on your knees, then and there, and thank God, by God!

All this had not been accomplished without work, but then it was work for himself, and not for others. Jack had never known before what it was to enjoy the fruit of his own labor; he had always been a cog in the blind machinery of other people, exchanging so much toil for so much money. Now that he could see his little plantation grow and prosper beneath his hands, every hour repaid with nature's usury, he began to feel the elation that a man finds in independence. At first Fetuao had entered but half-heartedly into his plans; she would sit on a log and watch him with mirthful wonder as he swung his ax on the land Faalelei had given them; and when, for a spell, he took a place beside her she would tenderly wipe the sweat from his forehead and look at him with perplexity. Work, yes, that, as the preacher said, was the curse of Adam; but this daily persistency was not understandable. Had not Faalelei plenty for them both? And if one *taro* sufficed, why be at the pains to plant two?

But little by little it began to dawn on her that there was another side to this feverish devotion to work. Jack took a load of yams to Apia, and came back with fifteen silver dollars and a bolt of print for a dress. He went again, and returned with a sewing machine, a pack of cards, and a bottle of trade scent; still another trip, and lo! he towed behind him a fine new boat with *Fetuao*

painted on the stern. Then she at last succumbed to the fascination of the white way. *Paga!* There were dollars in the ground, and for the asking they could be made to grow. This lesson learned, Fetuao threw off her indifference and became as ardent a planter as her unwearied husband. Lying in his arms at night, her talk ran continually on the theme of which neither ever tired. Not a dollar was earned but was thus laid out in advance, with eager questioning and debate. The cow was bought, the horse, the chickens, the wire for fencing. It was a game in which each played a part with enduring zest; a game with a constant round of prizes and enjoyment; a game in which green nature was the board and every plant and tree a piece. At sundown they knew no pleasure like that of wandering hand in hand through the paths of their little estate, two poetic peasants, filled with love for each other and immeasurably content.

Thus the days passed in increasing satisfaction and prosperity, days so rare in the life of any man when he says to himself, "I am happy." To Jack, these three words, never spoken, but somewhere within him articulate and peremptory, these three words almost overwhelmed him with their significance. He trembled for this treasure, so elusive, so transitory, perhaps, so surely ill deserved; he grew humble with the thought of his

own unworthiness, and, though no believer in the ordinary sense, he began to feel the first stirring of religion. When Fetuao, with sweet shame, laid her head against his shoulder and told him of her impending motherhood, he kissed her, comforted her, and then, rising to his feet, he sought the solitude that at such a moment he felt he could not share even with her. In one of the unfrequented corners of the bay, a narrow beach shadowed by the forest and faced by the open sea, he threw himself upon his knees with a passionate thankfulness that seemed to find its expression in this act. Knowing no prayer, addressing no God, he simply gazed above him in the sky, in a rapt, dumb gratitude.

As he walked home he thought of his own parents, long since dead; of their hopes, their cares, their humble unfulfilled ambitions, now dead with them. He perceived himself, now for the first time, a link between the past and the future, the heir of bygone generations, generations that had loved, and suffered, and struggled, to no other end than that he might live—he, and the sister he had neither seen nor heard from in fourteen years. Hell! he ought to write to Amandar. Families oughtn't to drift apart like that. It was a shame, a durned shame, and it came over him with a shock that she, too, might be dead. He took a sheet of paper and a pencil, and with heaving

breast and overflowing heart thus broke the silence of those long years:

OA BAY, SAMOA, May 14, 1899.

DEAR SIS, You will be surprised to get a letter from me after all this time. I am well and hope you are enjoying a simillar blessing. I am married now and left the sea. I suppose Joe is a man along in middle life now and you a handsome mattron with a family. This is a good country but hot.

Ever your affectionate brother

JACK WILSON.

P. S.—I often think of Pa and Ma and the old days.

Not long after, Jack sailed into Apia with a load of copra and his letter for the outgoing mail. The town was in an uproar, and cracking like the Fourth of July. Jack wondered what in thunder it was about, as he landed at Leicester's wharf and discovered the postmaster lying underneath the post office in a nest of sand bags. Crawling in after the functionary, Jack handed him the letter.

"That's for America," said Jack.

"Five cents," said Leicester.

"What's all this corrobborree?" asked Jack.

"It's war, that's what it is," said Leicester, weighing the letter in a tin scale.

Jack's jaw fell. For a month past he had heard rumors of a native war, but he had resolutely closed his ears to all that Fetuao was so insistent to tell him. It was none of his business, he had said to her uneasily. He wasn't no politician, and all he asked of anybody was to be let alone; and with that he had tried to put the matter by as something imaginary and disquieting, which, if boldly ignored, would disappear of itself.

"Say, Mr. Leicester, what in hell is it about?" he inquired.

"If you went to the bottom of it you would find Dutchmen," said Leicester grimly.

Jack cursed the meddling scoundrels.

"They want Mataafa for king, just because he has a majority of two thousand votes," said Leicester.

"There sounds to be something in that," said Jack faintly.

"Nothing at all!" exclaimed Leicester. "Just speciousness, that's what I call it. The other fellow, Tanumafili, is a nice-appearing boy from the missionary college, and being above wire-pulling and promising everything to everybody, he hasn't any following to speak of. But he's a good, decent Protestant boy, and will make a fine king."

"Oh, ho!" said Jack, beginning to see how the wind lay, "and so the other dodger's a Catholic?"

"A rank, bigoted Catholic," said Leicester hot-

ly. "That's what makes the missionaries so wild against him, and likewise the British and American officials."

"They won't let him be king, then?" asked Jack.

"He's a rebel," said Leicester, "and they've posted proclamations against him on every cocoanut tree around the beach."

"And the natives, they won't let Tanumafili be king neither?" said Jack.

"That's him they're chasing into the sea this minute," explained Leicester.

Jack looked perplexed. "I don't see why the Kanakas shouldn't have the king they fancy," he remarked.

"To hear you talk, one would think you was a bloody Dutchman yourself," said Leicester.

"But the majority—" said Jack, "them two thousand——"

"The Chief Justice ruled them out on a technicality," said Leicester, "and if the Supreme Court ain't right, who is? Do you think he's going to give over this country to a papist? No, the only king here is Tanumafili, and the men-of-war will reinstate him at the muzzle of their guns. Then we'll see who's who in Samoar!"

Jack made his way across the street to the store where he usually sold his copra. Bullets were pattering on the roof, and the trader himself, a portly

German in gold spectacles, was palpitating in a bomb-proof.

"I hope Mrs. Meyerfeld is well," said Jack, who in Samoa had grown punctilious.

"Oh, mein Gott!" exclaimed Meyerfeld.

"And the children?—" inquired Jack, "Miss Hilda and Miss Theresa?"

"Oh, mein Gott!" said Meyerfeld.

"I have brought you forty bags of copra," said Jack.

"Oh, mein Gott!" said Meyerfeld.

"Don't you want it, then?" inquired Jack.

"Hear the pullets," quavered Meyerfeld.

"But forty bags," said Jack.

"I've no man, no noding," groaned the trader. "Gome again negst week. Gome again after de war."

"I'll put it in the shed myself," said Jack.

He went out into the empty street and looked about him. The firing was going on as hotly as ever, but except for a single limp figure, face down in the dust, he failed to see the least sign of the contending parties. From the direction of the Mulivai bridge he heard bursts of cheering, with intermittent lulls and explosions as the battle rolled to and fro. War on so small a scale is startlingly like murder, and Jack shuddered as he went up to the corpse and turned it over. He returned to his boat, and in a fever of activity unloaded his forty

bags and trundled them in batches into Meyerfeld's copra shed across the road. It took half a dozen trips of the little flat-car to accomplish this task single-handed, and then there was the further delay in weighing each bag and checking off the contents on a bit of paper. Nor was this all, for he had to make a copy, besides, and tack it on the warehouse door with the inscription, "Taly and find correct John Wilson."

This done, he dropped into his boat and hoisted the sails, weary, heartsick, and anxious for what the future might have in store for him. Passing to leeward of the British man-of-war, he saw her decks swarming with refugees, her crew grouped about the guns, and an officer in the fore-cross-trees sweeping the town with his glass. A gust of wind carried down to him the sound of children crying, and with it an indistinguishable humming, at once menacing and dejected, like the sigh of an impending gale. It echoed in his ears long afterwards, the most poignant note in war, the voice of the herded, helpless multitude.

He reached Oa in the gray of the morning, and the grating of his boat's keel in the sand brought out Fetuao to meet him. She could not restrain her joy at the sight of him, kissing his hands and clinging to him as he took out the sails and oars and carried them up to the house. She never seemed so sweet to him, never so girlish and charm-

ing in her fresh young womanhood as in that dawn of his home-coming. To hear her laugh, to see her eyes sparkle, to feel her warm breath against his cheek, all transported him into a state of unreasoning security. Apia and its blood-stained streets faded into the immeasurable distance; the war, and all the attendant horrors that had haunted him, now seemed for a moment too remote to even think of. What had he to fear, here on his own hearthstone, with his dear wife beside him, in another world from that he had so lately quitted? If there was trouble, wouldn't the counsuls settle it, them and the treaty officials whose job it was to run the blessed group? He had never been no politician himself, and he wasn't agoing to begin now. Let them worry as was paid to worry.

"Fetuao," he said, "where is the flag the *faamasino* gave us when we were married in Apia?"

"*O i ai pea i le pusa,*" she returned.

"Get it out, my pigeon," he said, "for I mean to hoist it above the house for a protection. And tell me, Fetuao," he went on, "what before I have never asked thee: on what side are thy people in this *misa* of Mataafa and Tanumafili?"

"For Mataafa," she returned. "Dost thou think that Samoa wants this untattooed boy from the missionary college? Why else did Faalelei and the young men go last month to Apia to be num-

bered for Mataafa, the whites promising that he who had most voices should be king? And when all Samoa cried out 'Mataafa!' at the numbering place (all except the little handful of the Tuamasanga), lo! the word was given that Tanumafili was appointed after all, and that the white manner of choice was to be disregarded!"

Jack sighed as he took the flag and went out with it. He realized that his old life was at an end, and that a new one, full of uncertainty and danger, was to date from the time he hoisted this bit of bunting. He trimmed a straight piece of *fuafua* for a staff, and as he did so he cursed the missionaries for meddlers and the treaty officials for crazy fools. When the flag was at last in place, Fetuao and he drew away to get a better view of it from the beach. Standing there, in silence they watched the vivid colors flaunt and flutter against the wooded hills behind, while Jack, with a seaman's instinctive reverence for the flag, bared his head, and Fetuao clapped her hands with delight.

"Is it not beautiful!—" she cried, "as starry as the nights before we were married, Jack, when we used to walk together, here and there, like uncaring children."

Her husband did not answer; and as she turned and looked up into his face she saw that his eyes were wet with tears.

IV

The two months that followed were the most terrible in the history of Samoa. A handful of exasperated whites—treaty officials, missionaries, and consuls—were determined to foist Tanumafili on the unwilling natives of the group, and backed by three men-of-war, they declared Mataafa a rebel and plunged the country into a disastrous and sanguinary war. England and America, in the person of their respective naval commanders, vied with one another in their self-appointed task; and while the Germans stood aloof, protesting and aghast, our ships ravaged the Samoan coast, burning, bombarding, and destroying with indiscriminate fury. In this savage conflict, so unjust in its inception, so frightful in its effects on an unoffending people, the Samoans showed an extraordinary spirit in defending what all men hold most dear. Driven from the shore by our guns, they massed their warriors behind Apia, and on ground of their own choosing gave obstinate battle to the invaders.

It is not the writer's purpose to follow the varying stages of this ignoble quarrel, in which blood flowed like water in our vain attempts to force the unwilling Samoans to accept a Protestant divinity student for their king. This little war, so remote, so ill understood at home, so brief, violent, and

unjust, swept over the islands like a hurricane. Abruptly begun by headstrong naval officers and officials on the spot, it was as abruptly ended by peremptory orders from London and Washington; but the interval (necessarily a long one) before the news could go out and the orders return halfway round the world, was sufficient to reduce Samoa to the verge of ruin.

In such a country, without roads, telegraphs, or newspapers, where rumor passes from mouth to mouth, and facts, in the process, get twisted out of all recognition, war brings with it a period of agonizing ignorance, when anything is told and anything believed. To Jack this waiting became almost intolerable; his suspense, and the uncertainty of those dreadful days, told on him with an augmented force, so that he grew thin and started at a sound. Through an unseen channel the news of fighting persistently trickled into Oa; more battles; more villages bombarded; such an one wounded, such an one killed, with stories of the increasing ruthlessness of the British and Americans. On some days the sound of cannon could be plainly heard from leeward, the signal for the women and children to crowd with their pastor into the church, and for the men—the scanty remnants that still remained—to grasp their rifles and melt into the forest.

But as time passed, and one false alarm was suc-

ceeded by another, Jack plucked up a little heart. He began to make allowance for native exaggeration and laughed at his own former fears. If the men-of-war should come to Oa, were they likely to bombard an undefended village full of women and children, or burn, pillage, and destroy as mercilessly as he had been told? Bah! a pack of Kanaka lies, the gradual distortion of the truth as it passed along the line, until one burned house became a hundred and one village the whole coast of Atua! He went back to his neglected plantation, now overgrown with weeds, and set to work again with a determination not to borrow trouble. But, in spite of himself, he would find himself listening for the sound of cannon, laying down his ax or his bush knife in a panic and running back to the shore to make sure that nothing had happened in the hour he had been gone.

It was during one of these mornings in the bush, a morning singularly free of the apprehensions which usually beset him, that Fetuao came rushing through the bananas where he was at work, crying out, *"Manuao, manuao!"* Together, without exchanging a single word, they flew headlong to the beach, never stopping until they took shelter beneath the eaves of their own house. Yes, there was the man-of-war, a Britisher with yellow funnels, well outside the reef, towing behind her a flotilla of boats chock-a-block with natives. The

red head-dresses of their crews showed them to be the followers of Tanumafili, and a couple of unmistakable pith helmets in the stern of the biggest betrayed the presence of directing white men. At the tail of the boats was a large steam launch flying the stars and stripes, the American contribution to the little fleet.

Jack breathed a sigh of relief at the sight of his own flag. Wherever that flew he knew that he and his were safe. By George! everybody in Oa Bay was safe so long as they didn't try to make a fight of it; and he could have laughed to see the terrified women scooting for the church, the children bawling at their heels. The fools, what had they to fear? American officers were not the kind to fire on women and children, nor were they likely to look on mum-chance, and let the lime-juicers do it neither. No, sirree!

The man-of-war slowed down her engines and came almost to a standstill. There was a sudden flash from one of her sponsons, a puff of smoke, and then the roar of a six-inch gun. The shell struck a palm not a hundred yards from where Jack was standing, and with a loud explosion took off the entire top as neatly as though a knife had sliced it.

"Good God!" cried the sailor; and the words were scarcely out of his mouth before he heard the venomous rush of another shell. Jack could

not believe his senses. What! no warning, no notice beforehand; not even ten minutes to allow the women and children to get out of danger!

Bang! The church this time! He clutched Fetuao as he saw the shower of cement and rocks, and the frenzied flight of its occupants for safety. If that shell had gone through the window instead of striking the corner——

Bang!

"Run! run!" cried Fetuao, and without even waiting for him to follow or turning round to see that he did so, she darted through the house and disappeared. But Jack, in a white heat of indignation, folded his arms and remained doggedly where he was. Let them shoot, the skunks! Let them shoot, the stinking cowards! This was his house, and he would remain beside it until the crack of doom, shells or no shells. He would stand off them fire-bugs and looters when they landed, and tell them officers what a plain American citizen thought of them. He wasn't afraid of the swine. By God! he would like to boot the raft of them. He shook his fist in their faces, he did; and as for that villainous launch rolling idly in the swell while the big bully fired on the defenseless town, he spat to express his disgust for it.

The bombardment, like a salute, continued with regular intermissions between each gun. The marksmanship was poor, many of the shells falling

short or bursting prematurely in midair. Except for the church, which was twice struck, and the chief's house that was set on fire, the damage done was inappreciable; and Jack, whose heart at first had been in his mouth, now grinned with derision as he watched for the recurring flashes.

"The Chilaneans could do better nor you!" he cried.

"Jack," whispered a voice beside him, and there was Fetuao back again in a state of the sweetest contrition and remorse. He took her in his arms and kissed her; and then, like a pair of lovers, they held each other's hands and shrank close together as the shells burst over the village.

The firing lasted for an hour, and then the flotilla of boats, preceded by the American launch, passed in procession through the break in the reef, and headed for Jack's house.

"Oh, it's the flag they see!" cried Fetuao, and she besought Jack, with tears in her eyes, to haul it down.

"Never!" he said, grinding his teeth.

There were some three or four hundred men in the boats, and as they raced in, cheering and yelling at the top of their voices, Jack quailed in spite of himself. But outwardly, at least, he showed no sign of agitation, standing like a rock before his house and facing the storm that was about to burst.

It wasn't for himself that he was afraid, not so

long as that puffing-billy of a steamboat held the lead, and the grand old flag streamed out behind her. The jackies would see him through this business, whatever deviltry they might inflict on the rest of the unfortunate village, for blood's thicker than water every time, and Americans stand together all the world over. He wasn't no politician nor side-taker, and it was all the same to him whether he had a missionary king or a benighted papist. All he asked of anybody, by God! was to be let alone, though this broadsiding of defenseless people made him sick at the stummick, it did.

The launch came bumping into shallow water, blowing off clouds of steam as her crew jumped out with their rifles and waded ashore, while the Tanumafili boats, dashing up in quick succession, amid a furious and ever-deepening uproar, discharged in their turn cargo upon cargo of shrieking warriors. In the indescribable commotion that followed there seemed to be no prearranged plan nor any settled order of operation. The Tanus scattered in a dozen noisy parties, looting and burning the houses, barking the breadfruit trees, shooting the pigs and horses, devastating with diabolical thoroughness the inland plantations that sustained the village. The Americans, fearful of ambuscades, stuck to the shore and systematically destroyed the boats, which for a mile or two were drawn up on the edge of the beach.

These boats, in a country without roads, are as much a necessity to a man as the house which shelters him. They often represent the hoardings of years, and are not seldom the result of a stern frugality and self-denial; they constitute, indeed, the only wealth of Samoa, and in them is invested the united savings of the whole population. In Oa these boats numbered perhaps a hundred, or a hundred and twenty in all, which, under the direction of a red-faced boatswain with a package of dynamite sticks, were one by one blown to pieces, and the shattered boards drawn into heaps and fired. That day the whole of Oa went up in smoke and flame. Nothing was spared, not even the church, nor the school, nor the pastor's house; not a canoe nor a dugout; not a net, nor a fish trap, nor a float; not a pig, a horse, nor a chicken. The boundary walls, emerging black and desolate above the embers of the village, alone survived the universal waste.

Jack's boat, being the nearest, was the first to be singled out; and as the blue-jackets began to bore it with auger holes in which to place the dynamite, he walked down to the petty officer and roughly bade him leave it alone. "Hold on, there!" he said. "That's my boat!"

The boatswain looked him up and down. "You get out of this!" he said.

Jack twitched the auger from one of the sea-

men and flung it into the lagoon. Then, seizing a rifle from the heap lying on the ground, he whirled it round his head like a club and advanced furiously on the boatswain, who pulled out a six-shooter and leveled it at his head. Even as he did so, one of the officers came running up, waving his sword and shouting; while Jack, confident that he had nothing now to apprehend, dropped the rifle and turned to meet him. He had scarcely got so far as, "Please, sir, this boat is my property," when a scream from Fetuao warned him that the natives were rushing his house. Abandoning the boat, he ran back to face this new danger, which, of the two, was so infinitely the worse. His first instinct was to snatch a hatchet and kill one of the half-naked plunderers, but Fetuao, catching his hands, held him back, and the impulse passed as he realized his utter helplessness. With smarting eyes and a heart that seemed to burst within his breast, he saw his house gutted of everything—his chests torn open, his tools taken, his wife's poor finery divided, and her twenty-dollar sewing machine the subject of a wrangle that ended in its being smashed under the butt of a gun. It was horrible to look on, impotent and raging, and see the fruit of three years the prey of these yelling savages; to realize that he must begin again from the bottom; that all his labor, and care, and thrift, had gone for nothing. Not daring to leave Fetuao

behind, he took her with him and started off to find the officer to whom he had at first complained. His protest had not apparently been very effective, to judge from the torn fragments of the boat now blazing in a bonfire, and he was hardly encouraged to make a second attempt. However, slim as the chance was, it was now the only thing left to do. Surely it was not possible that they would let his house be looted and fired with the others!

The officer, a thin young man with a cigar, was standing in the shade of a palm.

"Mister," said Jack timidly, for somehow all the fight had oozed out of him, "Mister, they're looting my house up there!"

"Well?" said the officer.

"I'm an American," said Jack.

"Well?" said the officer.

Jack regarded him helplessly. "Can't you do nothing for an American?" he asked.

"Not for a damned beachcomber," said the officer, turning on his heel.

Jack did not attempt to follow or to pester him. He knew when he was beat. He sat down on the nearest log, and making room for Fetuao beside him, drew out his pipe, filled it and began to smoke. The girl tried to speak to him, but he would not answer. She whispered to him that their house was burning, and he never even turned his head to look. She took his hand, but he snatched it im-

patiently away, refusing to be comforted. Thus he remained for hours, sullen and half-stupefied, until the returning Tanus embarked again, and the launch, with jubilant whistles, led the flotilla back to the man-of-war. It was only when the ship was out of sight that Jack rose, stretched himself, and breathed the profound sigh of a man who has endured and has survived the most terrible experience of a lifetime.

With slow steps, and many expressions of anger and resentment, Fetuao and he walked through the village, gazing with bitter curiosity at the ruins that everywhere surrounded them. They made their way to their own little plantation, to find it devastated like the others, the breadfruit trees ringed, the coffee bushes torn up by the roots, the *taro,* bananas, and vanilla cut to pieces. In the paddock the cow and calf lay dead in a pool of blood; of the dairy, half-set in the stream, nothing remained but some stumps and smoking ashes; under a felled mango tree they saw the protruding hoofs of Fetuao's mare, Afiola.

Returning with a few bananas they managed to find in the plantation, they built a fire and roasted them within a few feet of where, that morning, their house had stood. Though nothing now was left of it but some charred wood, the place was still home to them. As Fetuao moved forlornly about, picking up a few trifles that had been dropped or

thrown away by the invaders—a comb, a spool of thread, a flatiron, a book or two with the covers scorched off—she lifted up a grimy rag and tossed it, with a little gesture of disdain, at her husband's feet. He spread it out and saw that it was the consul's flag, the flag he had flown above his house with such confidence in its protection; the flag which, until then, he had always reverenced.

Jack slowly tore it into pieces.

V

Nothing is stranger than the effect of the same misfortune on different natures. To Jack, arrested in the full tide of his petty activities, it was absolutely overwhelming. When everything he possessed was swept away, and with it the routine that for three years had kept him busy and content, he knew not what to do nor which way to turn. Sunk in apathy, he spent whole days in dully mourning for what he had lost. He would have starved had not Fetuao forced him to follow her into the mountains, where, under her direction, he dug *tamu* and climbed the trees for wild chestnuts; while she, with deft hands and a little tangled bunch of weeds, caught prawns in the pools and streams. At her bidding he made a tiny hut of cocoanut branches, a clumsy canoe good enough

to fish with, and nets from the sinnet she taught him how to twist out of cocoanut husks. She even sent him back to work in the plantation, for the bananas at least could be saved, and there was a well of sprouting yams and some *tingapula* that had somehow escaped destruction. But Jack's spirit was broken; the old incentive was gone; he could not revive the energy, the zest, the interest that before had never failed him. He did what Fetuao bade him and no more, and the days, once so short, seemed now never to end.

One morning early he was awakened by the murmur of voices in the dark, and on going to the door of the hut he was surprised to see Fetuao's brothers, Tua and Anapu, Mele her uncle, Lapongi the orator, and a dozen others, some of them boys not yet tattooed. In answer to his questions Tua told him that a messenger had come for them with orders to at once join the Mataafa forces behind Apia.

"And thou also, Jack," said Lapongi the orator, "for every man now is needed to withstand the fury of the whites."

Jack, as usual, turned to Fetuao.

"We shall both of us go," said she, "I to carry water for the wounded, thou with the *muaau*, a rock of strength and terror."

Jack made no protest. Hell! what did it matter where they went? Munching the food that

was handed him, he looked across the bay, now silvering in the dawn, and wondered whether he was not seeing it for the last time.

It was late at night when they passed the outposts and reached the Mataafa camp, which stood on a high plateau overlooking Apia. Below them the search-lights of the men-of-war moved restlessly about, shining at times with a bewildering brilliancy into their very faces; and from the little war-encompassed capital there rose a distant drumming and bugling as the missionary boy king, unsafe even under the guns of Britain and America, took his precautions against a night attack. After the stillness of Oa there was something confusing in the stir and bustle of Mataafa's big camp—in the constant passing of armed men, the change of guards, and the rousing choruses around the fires. There was, besides, an atmosphere of recklessness and gayety, engendered by excitement, by danger, by the very desperation of their cause, that could not long be resisted by even the most impassive recruit. Jack alone, of his whole party, remained indifferent and unmoved; but his wife, all of the savage in her rising to the surface, grew intoxicated almost to the point of delirium.

Ordinarily so demure and quiet, she became from henceforward a creature of another clay. Whirling her ax and dancing almost naked at the head of the Oa contingent, she led it wherever

it was sent, daring bullets and shells with smiling intrepidity. In her wild beauty an artist might have taken her for the spirit of war itself, as she moved undaunted along the firing line, or with biting reproaches drove up skulkers from the rear. Like some untried actress bringing down her house, she was overborne with her own success; and the more she was praised the more extravagantly and unflinchingly she exposed herself. Under the stress of those fierce emotions her character in every way underwent a change for the worse. In war time, death, always in the air, seems to annihilate with its dark shadow all the bonds that bind society together. Life, hitherto so assured, of a sudden becomes the most transient of human gifts, to be enjoyed with a feverish heedlessness before it vanishes forever into the unknown. Thus Fetuao found and accepted a dozen lovers among her men, and while still according her husband the first place, she yet permitted them liberties and familiarities that they were not slow to take advantage of.

Deep in every woman's heart there is a love for the men of her race, a love motherly and pitiful, that will bring the tears to her eyes at the sight of a passing regiment and cause her to passionately mourn the unknown soldier dead. This sentiment, this instinct, is a thousandfold intensified on the bloody field itself. The pang when those

brave fellows fall is inexpressible; her pride is strangely humbled, and in her mad exaltation she shrinks from nothing, and makes a virtue of her own abandonment.

Jack followed Fetuao everywhere, a despondent, woe-begone figure, who, amid the hail of bullets and the yells of contending warriors, lay or ran or advanced with the others in a black preoccupation. He had not a spark of interest in the struggle; his thoughts were forty miles away in that ruined home, with his plants, and trees, and shrubs, his cow, and his chickens. What victory could give them back? What terror had a defeat for one who had already lost his all! He lived in the past, in those frugal, thrifty, laborious years; for the present he had but an indifference, an apathy, that he had not even the desire to shake off.

He became the butt of the warriors, who brought him their rifles to mend and called him a coward for his pains. They envied him Fetuao, who, for all her flirtations, slept every night by his side and was not happy when he was out of her sight. They nicknamed him her "Pāalangi dog," and would whistle to him derisively and shout, "Come 'ere!" secure in the chronic absent-mindedness that had become a joke to them all. When he answered, as he always answered, "Eh, what?" and raised his vacant, moody face, there would be an outburst of laughter, in which he himself joined with a

mirthless geniality, like a man unbending to a lot of children. If a shell went off some one was sure to cry, "Eh, what?" and this phrase, together with a mimicry of Jack's slow, dejected utterance of it, became the stock pleasantry of the camp humorists, who brought it out on all occasions.

The conflicts about Apia were mostly affairs of outposts, a pressing in and a pressing back of the pickets on either side. The naval commanders, in spite of repeated bombardments and the enormous havoc they wrought along the coasts, found themselves hardly able to do more than hold their own against the Mataafa army. The safety of Apia was constantly in jeopardy, though barricades were thrown up in the streets and three hundred men landed from the ships. A desperate night attack on the main guard at the Tivoli Hotel betrayed the weakness of the whites to friends and foes alike, and redoubled the anxiety of the admiral and captains. It was plain that no decisive blow could be struck pending the arrival of the reënforcements that had been urgently cabled for from New Zealand, unless a better use were made of the missionary levies on the spot. These loose native organizations were accordingly broken up, consolidated into a single compact force of eight hundred men, well armed and well drilled, and placed under the absolute command of a naval lieutenant.

This fine force, supported by whites and Maxims, was counted on to retrieve the situation and drive Mataafa from his mountain stronghold. The plan for a joint attack was accordingly drawn up. A quota of seamen and marines, with a couple of machine guns, was to form the center of the little army, while the native brigade on either wing was to advance simultaneously, lap round and outflank the Mataafas. This operation, covered by a terrific bombardment from the three ships of war, was forthwith begun; on its success was staked the hopes of the little clique who had so lightly adopted the cause of a divinity student of seventeen, against the vote and wish of well-nigh all Samoa.

On that day the Oa party held the center of the Mataafa line, a stone wall stretching across a wide clearing to the forest on either side. It was the post of honor, for it crossed the road up which the enemy were toiling with their guns, and guarded the headquarters of the patriot king, not a hundred yards behind. In the trampled grass two hundred men sat or lay with their rifles in their hands and listened to the measured periods of the orators exhorting them to remember their wrongs and die fighting. These old men, white-haired, scarred with the wounds of bygone battles, their wrinkled hands clasping the staves on which they leaned, never winced as the shells whistled above their heads, nor abated by a hair's breadth

their tone of strident warning and encouragement. At such a distance, and against a target six hundred feet above the sea level, the men-of-war made poor practice and did little more than waste their ammunition. But the shattering detonations of their guns, and the thundering echoes rolling and re-rolling round the bay, made pleasant music for their crews ashore. It seemed incredible that such earth-shaking explosions could be wholly without effect, and the tired seamen sweating up the hill were kindled by the thought that the rebels were already suffering heavily and likely to run at the first encounter.

Sitting listlessly on a boulder, Jack scarcely took in the fact that anything out of the way was about to happen. His only concern was not to be too far from Fetuao, and so long as he had her in his sight he was dumbly content. He was as solitary among the thronging warriors as any castaway in mid-ocean, and his patient, stolid, inexpressive face, grown older in a month by a dozen years, was the only one which failed to reflect the coming conflict. Fetuao, on the contrary, was on fire from top to toe; her saucy tongue was loosened, and her bright eyes dancing in wild excitement. Joking and laughing in the roaring circle of her admirers, she matched her quick wit against them all in a victorious scream of banter and repartee.

Suddenly a shot rang out in the lower woods;

then two, with a faltering third; then a scattered volley like a bunch of firecrackers going off at once. A score of men showed at the turn of the road doubling back for dear life, the pickets who had been dislodged and driven in by the advancing whites. They had hardly leaped the wall, panting, and crouching with the main body behind it, when the machine guns wheeled into the open and began to fire. In the first murderous crash it seemed as though nothing human could withstand them, and the blue-jackets, dotted here and there in the grass, raised an exultant yell, and some even sprang up in anticipation of the call to charge. But the men that worked the guns had to stand exposed and helpless before a fire more galling than their own. They began to drop, and those who were unhurt disconcertedly turned and ran. A couple of officers sprang out of the grass to take charge of the abandoned guns, managing in their flurry to jam them both. For a minute they tinkered and hammered at the choked mechanism, exposing themselves, as they did so, to the concentrated volleys of a hundred Samoan rifles. Of a sudden, one clapped his hand to his breast and sank on his knees; his comrade caught him round the body and dragged him back, leaving the guns, now silent and useless, to shine innocuously in the sun.

All this while the woods on either hand reverberated with the volleys and the cheers of an ex-

tended battle, and a haze of powder smoke drifted above the tree tops. No one knew how the day was going, and the most conflicting rumors ran like wildfire through the Mataafa lines together with the names of such an one killed and such an one wounded. Dodging the bullets, Fetuao flitted about with water for the parched fighters, passing the news and rolling cigarettes for such of the wounded as were not too far gone to care for them. Occasionally she ferreted out a trembling wretch in the rear and drove him to the front with taunts; or, if he were too panic-stricken to get up, she had no compunction in thrashing him with a stick until he did so. The little savage was beside herself as she danced and sang like a wanton child in the rain—a rain of Martini and Lee-Remington balls stinging the air all about her.

After the machine guns were put out of action the fight became a rifle duel, which went on briskly for upward of an hour. Again and again the whites rose in the grass, blundered forward and took cover, each rush stemmed by the Oas, who, darting up from their wall, gave volley for volley at point-blank range. Standing in a slop of blood, their great naked feet trampling the dead and writhing bodies of their comrades, they rivaled the rocky wall itself in the unflinching obstinacy of their resistance. It was then the battle reached its deadliest stage, more falling in those terrible

minutes than during the whole previous course of the action. There was no shouting, no cheering, but with clenched teeth each man held his place and panted for the supreme moment that should spell either victory or rout. That moment came with the bugle call to charge, when the whites, rising for the last time, flung themselves forward with bayonets fixed. On they came, crimson-faced, mouths open, British and Americans in a pellmell rush like a rally of boys at football. Even as they did so, Fetuao leaped bolt upright on the wall, and swinging her carbine round her head, opposed her slender body to the whole attack. In an instant she was tumbling backward with a bullet through her throat, and as she lay coughing and strangling in the mire, Jack ran forward with a cry and caught her in his arms. There she died, amid the crash and roar of a hand-to-hand fight, jostled and stumbled on, her little hot hands clinging to his in the convulsive grasp of dissolution.

Jack sprang up like a madman. He had no thought in his dizzy head but vengeance—vengeance, sudden, bloody, and swift. He plunged into the thickest of the fray, cursing and raving as he opened a path with his brawny shoulders. A seaman tried to drive him through with a bayonet, but he caught the fellow round the neck and throttled him; he wrenched away the weapon and stabbed out with it right and left, with a strength,

"In an instant she was tumbling backward."

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skill, and ferocity that nothing could withstand. He was fired at again and again; his ashen face was twenty times a target, once at so close a range that the powder burned his very skin. As the line swayed to and fro in that desperate final struggle, there was a hoarse cry against him, constantly repeated, of, "Shoot that white man!" "Kill the renegade!" But Jack, seemingly proof against bullet and sword, stood his ground like a lion and clubbed the butt of his gun into the faces of his foes; and when the whites, at last losing heart, began to weaken and fall back, it was Jack that led the Samoan charge, waving a dripping bayonet, and bellowing like a maniac for the rest to follow him.

He stopped beside the guns, laughing wildly to see the blue-jackets scattering like rabbits down the hill, and throwing away their rifles, water bottles, and accouterments in their precipitate flight. There were wounded men lying all about him, groaning, some of them, and calling out faintly for help; but, hell! what did he care! Let them groan, the skunks; let them remember the women and children they had bombarded, and the houses they had burned, and the honest hearts they had broken! To hell with them! Besides, for the matter of that, he was feeling sort of sick himself—sort of numb and shivery—and he staggered like a drunken man as he went slowly back up to the

wall. It was all he could do to straddle the blamed thing, and then it was only with the help of a wounded Samoan who took his hand. The Kanaka, dizzily seen through a kind of mist, was no other than Tua; together, like men in a dream, they searched for Fetuao's body; and dragging it out of the shambles where it lay, they tried to clean away the blood with wisps of grass. Jack was sitting with the girl's head in his lap when he began to sway unsteadily backward and forward, feeling strangely sleepy and cold. He moaned. He gasped. Hell! they must have plugged him somewhere, after all. And then he rolled over—dead.

THE SECURITY OF THE HIGH SEAS

THINGS had been dull in Apia before the arrival of Captain Satterlee in the *Southern Belle*. Not business alone—which was, of course, only to be expected, what with the civil war being just over and the Kanakas driven to eat their cocoanuts instead of selling them to traders in the form of copra—but, socially speaking, the little capital of the Samoan group had been next door to dead. Picnics had been few; a heavy dust had settled on the floor of the public hall—a galvanized iron barn which social leaders could rent for six Chile dollars a night, lights included; the butcher's wedding, contrary to all expectation, had been strictly private, and might almost have slipped by unnoticed had it not been for a friendly editorial in the *Samoa Weekly Times*; and with the exception of an auction, a funeral, and a billiard tournament at the International Hotel, a general lethargy had overtaken Apia and the handful of whites who made it their home.

As Mr. Skiddy, the boyish American consul, ex-

pressed himself, "You can't get anybody to do anything these days."

Possibly this long spell of monotony contributed to Captain Satterlee's pronounced and instant success. The topsails of the *Southern Belle* had hardly more than appeared over the horizon, when people began to wake up and realize that stagnation had too long held them in its thrall. Satterlee was not at all the ordinary kind of sea captain, to which the Beach (as Apia always alluded to itself) was more than well acquainted. Gin had no attractions for Captain Satterlee, nor did he surround himself with dusky impropriety. He played a straight social game, and lived up to the rules, even to party calls, and finger bowls on his cabin table. He was a tall, thin American of about forty-five, with floorwalker manners, grayish mutton-chop whiskers, and a roving eye. The general verdict of Apia was that he was "very superior." His superiority was apparent in his gentlemanly baldness, his openwork socks, his well-turned references to current events, his kindly and indulgent attitude toward all things Samoan. He deplored the rivalry of the three contending nationalities, German, English, and American, whose official representatives quarreled fiercely among themselves and mismanaged the affairs of this unfortunate little South Sea kingdom, and whose unofficial representatives sold guns and cartridges indiscrim-

inately to the warring native factions. Satterlee let it be inferred that the rôle of peacemaker had informally settled upon himself.

"In a little place everybody ought to pull together," he would say, his bland tolerance falling like balm from heaven, and he would clinch the remark by passing round forty-cent cigars.

The *Southern Belle* was a showy little vessel of about ninety tons, with the usual trade room in the after part of the ship, where the captain himself would wait on you behind a counter, and sell you anything from a bottle of trade scent to a keg of dynamite. He never was so charming as when engaged in this exchange of commodities for coin, and it accorded so piquantly with his evident superiority that the purchaser had a pleasant sense of doing business with a gentleman.

"Of course, I might run her as a yacht, and play the heavy swell," he would remark. "But, candidly, I like this kind of thing; it puts me on a level with the others, you know; and then it's handy for buying supplies, and keeping one in touch with the people." With this he would give you such a warming smile, and perhaps throw in free a handful of fishhooks, or a packet of safety matches, or a toothbrush. Indeed, apart from this invariable prodigality, his scale of prices was ridiculously low, and if you were a lady you could buy out the ship at half price. As for young Skiddy, the

American consul, the bars in his case were lowered even more, and he was just asked to help himself; which young Skiddy did, though sparingly. Captain Satterlee took an immense fancy to this youthful representative of their common country, and treated him with an engaging mixture of respect and paternalism; and Skiddy, not to be behindhand, and dazzled, besides, by his elder's marked regard and friendship, threw wide the consular door, and constantly pressed on Satterlee the hospitality of a cot on the back veranda.

The captain professed to find it remarkable—which, indeed, it was—that a boy of twenty-six should have been intrusted with the welfare of so considerable a section of Samoa's white population. The roll of the consulate bore the names of thirty-eight Americans, not to speak of a thirty-ninth who was soon expected, over whom the young consul possessed extraordinary powers withheld from far higher posts in far more important countries. Young Skiddy, on a modest salary of two hundred dollars a month and a house rent-free, was supposed, if need be, to marry you, divorce you, try you for crimes and misdemeanors, and in extreme cases might even dangle you from the flagstaff in his front yard.

He had been very seldom called on, however, to use these extensive powers. In three years he had married as many couples, helped to baptize a half-

caste baby, held an inquest on a dead sailor, bullied a Samoan army off his front grass, and had settled a disputed inheritance involving five acres of cocoanuts. This, of course, left him with some spare time on his hands, which, on the whole, he managed to get through with very tolerable enjoyment. But until the date of Captain Satterlee's arrival he had never had a friend, or at least so it seemed to him now in the retrospect. His official colleagues were out of the question—the standoffish Englishman, the sullen German, the grotesque Swede who held the highest judicial office. No, there was not the little finger of a friend in the whole galaxy. And elsewhere? Not a soul to whom one could give intimacy without the danger, almost the certainty, of its being abused. No wonder, then, that he turned to Satterlee, and grasped the hand of fellowship so warmly extended to him.

The little consul had never known such a man; he had never heard such talk; he had never before realized the extent and splendor of the world. Sitting in the cabin of the *Southern Belle,* often far into the night, he would give a rapt attention to this extraordinary being who had done everything and seen everything. Paris, London, Constantinople, New York, all were as familiar to Satterlee as the palm of his hand, and he had the story-telling gift that can throw a glamour over the humblest incident. Not that his incidents were often

humble. On the contrary, in his mysterious suggestive fashion he let it be inferred that his bygone part had been a great one. He would offer dazzling little peeps, and then shut the slide; a chance reference that would make his hearer gasp; the adroit use of a mighty name, checked by a sudden, "Oh, hold on—I'm saying more than I ought to!" You felt, somehow, that to have roused the interest of this powerful personage was to insure your own career. With a turn of his hand he was capable of gratifying your wildest ambition. He had remarked your unusual capacity, and had quietly determined it should be given proper scope. When and where and how were to be settled later. These questions you left confidently to Satterlee. It was enough that you were informed, in those fine shades of which he was a master, that your day would surely come. On leaving Satterlee you walked on air without knowing exactly why; or rather Skiddy did, for by "you" I mean the little consul.

It is a sad commentary on human nature that it is so easily deceived. A glib tongue, an attractive manner, a few hundred dollars thrown carelessly about, and presto! you have the counterfeit of a Cecil Rhodes. We are not only willing to take people at their own valuation, but are ever ready to multiply that valuation by ten. Obtrude romance—rich, stirring romance—into the lives of

commonplace people, and they instantly lose their heads. Romance, more than cupidity, is what attracts the gold-brick investor.

Of course, Satterlee was a poser, a fraud, a liar; the highest type of liar; the day-dreaming, well-read, genuinely inventive, highly imaginative, loving-it-for-its-own-sake liar. But to Skiddy every word he said was Gospel-true. He never doubted the captain for an instant. Life grew richer to him, stranger and more wonderful. It was like a personal distinction—a medal, or the thanks of Congress—that Satterlee should thus have singled him out. His gratitude was unbounded. He felt both humble and elated. His cup was brimming over.

Let not his credulity be counted against him. After all, he was not the only admirer of the captain. Did he not see Satterlee lionized by the Chief Justice and the rest of his brother officials; publicly honored by the head of the great German company; called to the bosom of both the missionary denominations? Was not all Apia, in fact, regardless of sex, creed, or nationality, acclaiming Satterlee to the skies, and vying among themselves for the privilege of entertaining him? Never, indeed, were there so many picnics, so many parties, such a constant succession of dances at the public hall. Even the king was galvanized into action, and, to the surprise of everyone, gave a sort of

At Home, where Satterlee was the guest of honor, and received the second *kava* cup. A half-caste couple, who before had barely held up their heads, sprang into social prominence by getting married under the direct patronage of the popular captain, and thus rallying to their visiting list all the rank, fashion, and beauty of Apia.

It was a delirious month. There was an event for almost every night of it. The strain on the half-caste band was awful. Miss Potter's millinery establishment worked night and day. Of a morning you couldn't find a lady on a front veranda who wasn't stitching and sewing and basting and cutting out. And the men! Why, in the social whirl few of them had time to sober up, and the sale of Leonard's soda water was unprecedented.

As the time began to draw near for the monthly mail from San Francisco, Satterlee got restless and talked regretfully of leaving. He gave a great P.P.C. bargain day on board the *Southern Belle*, where sandwiches and bottled beer were served to all comers, and goods changed hands at astonishing prices: coal oil at one seventy-five a case; hundred-pound kegs of beef at four dollars; turkey-red cotton at six cents a yard; square face at thirty cents a bottle; and similar cuts in all the standard commodities. There was no custom house in those days, and you were free to carry everything ashore unchallenged. A matter of eighty tons must have

been landed all round the beach; and the pandemonium at the gangway, the crush and jostle in the trade room, and the steady hoisting out of fresh merchandise from the main hold, made a very passable South Sea imitation of a New York department store. At any rate, there was the same loss of temper, the same harassed expression on the faces of the purchasers, and the same difficulty in getting change. As like as not you had to take it—the change—in the form of Jews' harps, screw eyes, or anything small and handy that happened to be near by. It was the most lightning performance Apia had ever witnessed, and the captain carried it off in a brisk, smiling way, as though it was the best joke in the world, and he was only doing it all for fun.

Unfortunate captain! Unhappy destiny that brought in the mail cutter two days ahead of schedule! Thrice unlucky popularity that found thee basking in the sunshine of woman's favor instead of on thy four-inch deck! The pilot signaled the mail; Skiddy put forth in his consular boat, intercepting the cutter in the pass, and receiving (on his head) his own especial Government bag. The proximity of the *Southern Belle,* and the likelihood of Satterlee being at home, caused Skiddy to board the ship and open the bag on her quarter-deck. One stout, blue, and important-looking letter at once caught his eye. He

opened the stout, blue, and important-looking letter, and——

There were no white men in the crew of the *Southern Belle.* They were all Rotumah boys, with the exception of Ah Foy, the Chinese cook. This amiable individual was singing over his pots and pans when he was suddenly startled by the apparition of Skiddy at the galley door. The little consul was deathly pale, and there was something fierce and authoritative in his look.

"Come out of here," he said abruptly, "I want to talk to you!"

The Chinaman followed him aft. He had a pretty good idea of what was coming. That was why he was sewn up with two hundred dollars in hard cash, together with a twenty-dollar bill under his left heel. He began to cry, and in five minutes had blurted out the whole thing. Self-preservation is the first law, and he had, besides, some dim conception of State's evidence. Skiddy made the conception clearer, and promised him immunity if he would make a clean breast of it. This the Chinaman forthwith did in his laborious pigeon. A good part of it was incomprehensible, but he established certain main facts, and confirmed the stout, blue, important-looking letter. As Satterlee came off on a shore boat, pulling like mad, and then darted up the ladder in a sweat of apprehension, he was met at the top by Skiddy—not Skiddy

the friend, but Skiddy the arm of the law, Skiddy the retributive, Skiddy the world's avenger, with Seniko, his towering cox, standing square behind him.

"John Forster," he said, "*alias* Satterlee, I arrest you in the name of the United States, on the charge of having committed the crime of barratry, and warn you that anything you say now may be hereafter used against you."

It was a horrible thing to say—to be forced to say—and no sense of public duty could make it less than detestable. Skiddy almost whispered out the words. The brutality of them appalled him. Remember, this was his friend, his hero, the man whose intimacy an hour before had been everything to him. Satterlee gave him a quick, blank, panicky look, and then, with a pitiful bravado, took a step forward with an attempted return to his usual confident air. He professed to be dumfounded at the accusation; he was the victim of a dreadful mistake; he tried, with a ghastly smile, to reassert his old dominion, calling Skiddy "old man" and "old chap" in a shaky, fawning voice, and wanting to take him below "to talk it over." But the little consul was adamantine. The law must take its course. He was sorry, terribly sorry, but as an officer of the United States he had to do his duty.

Satterlee preceded him into the boat. The consul followed and took the yoke lines. They were

both dejected, and neither dared to meet the other's eyes. It was a mournful pull ashore, and tragic in the retrospect. A silence lay between them as heavy as lead. The crew, conscious of the captain's humiliation, though they knew not the cause, felt also constrained to a deep solemnity. Yes, a funereal pull, and it was a relief to everyone when at last they grounded in the shingle off the consulate.

Skiddy had a busy day of it. Leaving the captain at the consulate under guard, and sending off Asi, the chief of Vaiala, together with ten warriors armed with rifles and axes to take charge of the *Southern Belle* and her crew, he walked into Apia to make arrangements to meet the painful situation. Single-handed he had to rear the structure of a whole judicial system, including United States marshals, a clerk of court, four assessor judges, and a jail. His first steps were directed toward a little cottage on the Motootua Road, the residence of Mr. Scoville Purdy, a goaty, elderly, unwashed individual, who formed the more respectable half of the Samoan bar. Mr. Purdy was forthwith retained by the United States Government, and the papers of the case left in his hands. Skiddy next sought out Mr. Thacher, the other half of the bar, and directed him to defend the prisoner. Then he bent his mind to the consideration of jails, of which Samoa boasted two.

The municipal jail was a two-roomed wooden shed, sparingly furnished with a couple of tin pails. Humanity forbidding the incarceration of Captain Satterlee in such a hovel, the little consul passed on to Mulinuu, where the general Samoan Government held sway. The jail here was on a more pretentious scale. It consisted of a rectangular inclosure, perhaps sixty feet by forty, formed by four eight-foot walls of galvanized iron, and containing within five or six small huts of the kind that shipwrecked seamen might build on a desert island. In fact that was just about what they were, and as foul and repulsive as the real article. Owing to financial stringency the Samoan Government was unable to house or feed its prisoners, who for both these reasons might well be described as castaways. These unfortunates were absent at the time of Skiddy's visit, employing a very languid leisure on the improvement of the roads; and the consul could not have penetrated the jail at all had it not been for the king, who, on being appealed to, was obliging enough to lend the diplomat his spare key.

Skiddy stood and regarded the place with an immense depression. It would not do at all. It was no better than a cattle pen. He was about to turn away, when the two Scanlons appeared on the scene, their keen noses having scented out a job. The Scanlons were burly half-castes, of a

muddy, sweaty complexion, whose trustworthiness and intelligence were distinctly above the average. The Scanlon brothers, to any one in a difficult position, could be relied upon as pillars of strength. There was nothing a Scanlon brother wouldn't do, and do well, for two dollars and fifty cents a day. Mind and muscle were both yours—Scanlon mind and muscle—for this paltry and insignificant sum; and the consul, in his quandary, welcomed the stout, bristly haired pair as though they were angels from heaven.

In less time than it takes to write, Alfred Scanlon was appointed a United States marshal, Charles Scanlon an assistant United States marshal, and the arrangement was made with them to take full charge of Captain Satterlee during his trial. He was to live in their cottage, have his meals served from the International Hotel, and, while carefully guarded night and day, was to be treated "first class" throughout.

"The law of the United States," boomed out little Skiddy, "assumes that a prisoner is innocent until he is actually convicted. I want both of you to remember that."

The Scanlons didn't understand a word of what he said, but they saluted, and looked very much impressed. When you bought a Scanlon you got a lot for your money, including a profound gravity when you addressed him. It was the Scanlon way

of recognizing that you were paying, and the Scanlon receiving, two dollars and fifty cents a day!

At the head of his two satellites, who kept pace respectfully behind him, Skiddy next directed himself to find Dillon. Dillon was a variety of white Scanlon, though of an infinitely lower human type, who kept a tiny store and cobbled shoes near the Mulivae bridge; and who, from some assumed knowledge of legal procedure, invariably acted as clerk of the court—any court—American, English, or the Samoan High. You associated his heavy, bloated, grog-blossomed face, and black-dyed whiskers, as an inevitable part of the course of justice. It was his custom to take longhand notes of all court proceedings, as, of course, stenographers were unknown in Apia; and at times it would seem as though all Samoan justice boiled down to dictating to Dillon. As a witness, you never looked at the judge; you looked at Dillon, and wondered whether he was taking you down right. A careful witness always went slowly, and used the words that Dillon was likely to understand.

Dillon having been found and engaged, the next procedure was to appoint the assessor judges, of whom the consular instructions insisted on there being four. This weighty matter seemed to require the cooperation of the vice consul, Mr. Beaver, a highly respected quack doctor, whose principal nostrum was faith cure plus hot water.

After arguing away your existence, which he always could do with extraordinary fluency, he would plunge you into a boiling bath till your imaginary skin turned a deep imaginary scarlet, and then send you home with some microscopic doses of aconite. The best that could be said of him was that he never really harmed anybody, scalded the poor for nothing, and was willing (and even pressing) to turn over serious cases to the regular practitioner, Dr. Funk.

There were twenty-seven American citizens on the consular roll of male sex, sound mind, and above twenty-one years of age. Four of them lived far from Apia, and were therefore unavailable. Two more, as known deserters from the United States navy, were considered unworthy of the judgment seat. Forged or suspected naturalization papers threw out another five. This reduced the residuum to sixteen, whose names were written on slips of paper, thrown into a pith helmet, and tumbled together. The first four withdrawn constituted the assessor judges, who were at once warned by messenger to be in attendance at the consulate at ten the next morning, or be punished for contempt.

What a stir was made in the little town as the news went round! Satterlee, the cherished, the entertained, the eagerly sought after—Satterlee, had been discovered to be a pirate! The *Southern*

Belle was no *Southern Belle* at all, but the *James H. Peabody*! He had shipped as supercargo, putting in a thousand dollars of his own to lull Mr. Crawford's suspicions, and then had marooned the captain and mate on Ebon Island, and levanted with the ship! Heavens! what cackle, what excitement, what a furious flow of beer in every saloon along the beach! It was rumored that the great bargain-day sales might be canceled; that the goods might have to be returned; that not a penny of compensation would be paid to the unlucky purchasers. Then what a rubbing off of marks took place, what a breaking up of tell-tale cases, what a soaking off of tags! The whole eighty tons disappeared like magic, and you could not find a soul who would even confess to a packet of pins!

The trial took place in the large office room of the consulate. The big front doors stood open to the sea, where a mile away the breakers tossed and tumbled on the barrier reef. The back door was kept shut, to keep out the meaner noises of domesticity, but at intervals in the course of the trial you could hear the deliberate grinding of the consular coffee; the chasing of consular chickens; the counting of the consular wash; shrill arguments over the price of fish—a grotesque juxtaposition that seemed to make a mock of the whole proceedings.

The consul, in well-starched white clothes and

pipe-clayed shoes, sat on a dais beneath the crossed flags of his country, giving the effect of an elegant and patriotic waxwork. Below him were the four assessors, sunburned, commonish, seafaring men, with enormous hands that they did not know what to do with, who moved uneasily in their chairs, and looked about for places to spit—and then didn't dare to! One, whose brawny arms far exceeded the shrunken sleeves of his jumper, unbared to view on his hairy skin the tattooed form of a naked mermaid. A table stood in the center of the uncarpeted room, with a lawyer on either side—Purdy, the goaty-haired, messy, elderly man, half-blind, sharp-voiced, rasping out his case; opposite him, Thacher, a slinky, mean-looking young man, who was reputed to have left New Zealand under a cloud. He looked what he was, a cheap lawyer's clerk, of the pinched, hungry variety one sees in gloomy anterooms. At the head of the table was Dillon, the everlasting dictatee, his dyed black whiskers drooping in the heat, who raised a fat hand from time to time as a break on outstripping tongues. And there the captain, the cause of all this singular assembly, tilting back in his chair, or occasionally leaning over to whisper into his counsel's ear—spare, angular, careworn—with his grim mouth and resolute air, as though the soul within him refused to be cowed by such droning tomfoolery.

Beside the front door was a shabby basket-work sofa, where members of the public were entitled to sit. They would tiptoe in, these members of the public, furtively, as though expecting to be shot on sight, the bolder ones perhaps exchanging a whisper, the weaker brethren silent, and trembling if they caught an official eye. Outside, on the steps of the broad veranda, the brothers Scanlon lolled and slumbered, with pewter stars on their sweaty breasts, enjoying the deep contentment that comes with two dollars and fifty cents a day.

The trial lasted two days, but judgment was held over for the third. The case against Satterlee was complete. The San Francisco affidavits, properly made out by competent hands, were confirmed by the confession of Ah Foy, the cook, who (besides Satterlee) was the only present member of the original crew. Satterlee set up the lame defense that he had purchased the vessel from Crawford, and was therefore her actual owner. He was sworn, and gave evidence accordingly, but Purdy's cross-examination left him without a leg to stand on. He cut a pitiful figure as he floundered and lied and contradicted himself under the lash of that relentless tongue, miring himself ever deeper with explanations that did not explain, and agitated references to a "conspiracy" whose object it was to ruin him. No, the only thing to be considered

was the degree of punishment that would adequately offset his crime.

On the reassembling of the Court on the morning of the third day, little Skiddy, from the majesty of the dais, summed up the case at length. It covered nine sheets of foolscap, and had cost him hours of agonizing toil. Beginning with a general rhetorical statement about the "policy of nations" and "the security of the high seas," he descended by degrees to the crime of barratry—or, in plainer English, the theft of ships. He looked at barratry from every side, and the more he looked the less he seemed to like it. It was the cradle of piracy; it destroyed the confidence of owners; barratry, if frequently repeated, would shake the whole commercial structure. A person who committed barratry would commit anything. In this manner he went on and on, reviewing the evidence of the case, destroying the whole fabric of the defense, dwelling at length on the enormity of the entire transaction. The *James H. Peabody* had been deliberately seized. The prisoner had lawlessly converted her, the property of another, to his own base uses. He had broken into the cargo and shamelessly sold it as his own. He could plead neither the extenuation of youth, nor ignorance, nor the urging of others. He had conceived the crime, and had carried it out single-handed. The Court could not accept the contention that Ah Foy,

the Chinaman, had been in any sense a confederate or an accomplice. The Court dismissed the charge against Ah Foy. But, after mature deliberation, its unanimous judgment was that John Forster, *alias* Satterlee, was *guilty*. The Court sentenced John Forster, *alias* Satterlee, to *ten years' penal servitude*.

Purdy popped up with some question as to the scale of court fees. Thacher winked at Dillon, and began to roll up his papers. Skiddy descended from the dais and became an ordinary human being again. The captain, leaning forward in his chair, gazed absently out to sea. The Scanlon brothers appeared, officiously wanting to know what they were to do next. Skiddy was unable to tell them, except that they were to stay by the prisoner until he could consult with the authorities. He put on his hat, lit a cigar, and forthwith departed.

The President was kind, the Chief Justice urbane. The income of the kingdom barely sufficed for their two salaries, and they judged it incumbent (as they could do nothing else) to be as polite as possible to the American consul. But jails? Oh, no, they couldn't oblige Skiddy with a new jail! He was welcome to what they had, but it wasn't in reason that he could expect anything better. Skiddy said it was a hog-pen. The President retorted that the king's allowance was eight months in arrears, and that the western end of the island was still in

rebellion. Jails cost money, and they had no money. Skiddy declared it was an outrage, and asked them if they approved of putting a white man into a bare stockade, with none of the commonest conveniences or decencies of life? They were both shocked at the suggestion. The pride of race is very strong in barbarous countries. A white man is still a white man even if he has committed all the crimes in the calendar. The Chief Justice very seriously pointed out that it would disgrace them all to confine Satterlee in the stockade, and force him to mix with the dregs of the native population. Surely Mr. Skiddy could not consider such a thing for a moment. Mr. Skiddy wanted to know, then, what the deuce he was to do? The Chief Justice benignantly shook his head. He had no answer to that question. The President murmured suavely, that perhaps next year, with an increased hut tax, and the suppression of the rebellion, the Government might see its way to——

"Next year!" roared Skiddy. "I want to know what I'm to do NOW!"

The two high officials gazed at him sadly. It was a great peety, they observed (with an air of gentle complaint), that Mr. Skiddy should have embarrassed the government at a time when its whole position was so precarious. Had he not better refer the matter to Washington? Doubtless Washington, recognizing the fact that——

Skiddy flung himself out, lest his anger should get the best of him. He went and had another look at the jail, and liked it even less than before. Faugh! it was disgusting! It would kill a white man in a week. It would be nothing less than murder to put Satterlee into it. He returned to the consulate to talk over the matter with the trusty Scanlons.

Would they consider a monthly arrangement on a reduced charge, giving Satterlee the best room in their cottage, and pledging themselves that he should never quit the confines of their three-acre cocoanut patch? The half-caste brothers fell in joyfully with the suggestion, and their first wild proposals were beaten down to forty dollars a month for custodianship and fifteen dollars for the room and the transport of Satterlee's food from the International Hotel—fifty-five dollars in all. Thirty dollars a month for the hotel raised the grand total to eighty-five dollars. Skiddy wondered ruefully whether Washington would ever indorse this arrangement, but in his desperation he couldn't see that he had any other choice. He would simply *make* Washington indorse it. It was with great relief that he saw the captain's departure from a corner of his bedroom window, and felt that, for the moment, at least, he had a welcome respite from all his perplexities.

He put a captain and crew on board the *James*

H. Peabody, and packed her back to San Francisco, at the same time apprising the State Department by mail, and begging that a telegraphic answer might be sent him in respect to Satterlee's imprisonment, and the expense it had necessarily entailed. He calculated that the telegram would catch an outgoing man-of-war that was shortly due. The consular salary was two hundred dollars a month, and if the eighty-five dollars for Satterlee was disallowed, the sum was indubitably bound to sink to one hundred and fifteen dollars. Deducting a further fifty, which little Skiddy was in the habit of remitting to his mother, a widow in narrow circumstances, and behold his income reduced to sixty-five a month! It was hardly surprising, therefore, that Skiddy waited on pins and needles for the Department's reply.

In the course of weeks it came.

Skiddy U S consul apia samoa satterlee case the department authorizes charge for food, but none for custody or lodging, bronson assistant secretary.

This was a staggering blow. It definitely placed his salary at ninety-five dollars. He sat down and wrote a stinging letter to the Department, inclosing snapshot pictures of the jail, the prisoners, the huts, and other things that cannot be described here. It evolved an acrimonious reply, in which

he was bidden to be more respectful. He was at liberty (the dispatch continued), if he thought it advisable as an act of private charity, to maintain the convict Satterlee in a comfortable cottage, but the Department insisted that it should be at his (Skiddy's) expense. The Department itself advocated the jail. If the situation were as disgraceful as he described it, ought not the onus be put on the Samoan Government, and thus place the Department in a position "to make strong representations through the usual diplomatic channels"?

"But in the meantime what would happen to Satterlee?" returned the consul in official language, across six thousand miles of sea and land.

"You are referred to the previous dispatch," retorted the Department.

"But it will kill him," said Skiddy, again crossing an ocean and a continent.

"If the convict Satterlee should become ill, you are at liberty to send him to the hospital."

"Yes, but there isn't any hospital," said Skiddy.

"The Department cannot withdraw from the position it took up, nor the principle it laid down in Dispatch No. 214 B."

Thus the duel went on, while Skiddy cut down his cigars, sold his riding horse, and generally economized. A regret stole over him that he hadn't sentenced Satterlee to a shorter term, and he looked up the Consular Instructions to see what

pardoning powers he possessed. On this point the little book was dumb. Not so the Department, however, to whom a hint on the subject provoked the reply, "that by so doing you would stultify your previous action and impugn the finding of the Consular Court. The Department would view with grave displeasure, etc.——"

Satterlee soon made himself very much at home in the Scanlon prison. His winning personality never showed to better advantage than in those days of his eclipse. He dandled the Scanlon offspring on his knee; helped the women with their household tasks; played checkers with the burly brothers. He was prodigiously respected. He gathered in the Scanlon hearts, even to uncles and second cousins. You would have taken him for a patriarch in the bosom of a family of which he was the joy and pride. He received the best half-caste society on his front porch, and dispensed Scanlon hospitality with a lavish hand. These untutored souls had no proper conception of barratry. They couldn't see any crime in running away with a schooner. They pitied the captain as a bold spirit who had met with undeserved misfortunes. The Samoan has ever a sympathetic hand for the fallen mighty, and the hand is never empty of a gift. Bananas, pineapples, *taro,* sugar cane, *palisami,* sucking pigs, chickens, eggs, *valo*—all descended on Satterlee in wholesale lots. Girls brought him

leis of flowers to wear round his neck; annoymous friends stole milk for his refreshment; pigeon hunters, returning singing from the mountains, deferentially laid their best at his feet. Nothing was too good for this unfortunate chief, who bore himself so nobly, and had a smile and a kind word for even the humblest of his admirers.

On Sundays Skiddy paid the captain a periodical visit. He would bring the latest papers, if there were any, or a novel or two from his scanty stock. Their original friendship had died a violent death, but a new one had gradually risen on the ashes of the old. Skiddy had no more illusions in respect to this romantic-minded humbug and semi-pirate; but the man was likable, tremendously likable, and, in spite of himself, the little consul could not forbear suffering some of the pangs of remorse. The world was so big, so wide, with such a sufficiency of room for all (even romantic-minded humbugs and semi-pirates), and it was hard that Providence should have singled him out to clip this eagle's wings. There was something, too, very pathetic in Satterlee's contentment. He confided to Skiddy that he had never been so happy. With glistening eyes he would discourse on "these simple people," "these good hearts," "this lovely and uncontaminated paradise, where evil seems never to have set its hand," and expatiate generally on the beauty, charm, and tranquillity of Samoan life. He dreaded

the time, he said, when a ruthless civilization would sweep it all away.

Satterlee and he took long walks into the mountains, invariably accompanied by a Scanlon brother to give an official aspect to the excursion. It maintained the fast-disappearing principle that Satterlee was a convict and under vigilant guard. It served to take away the appearance, besides (which they might otherwise have presented), of two friends spending a happy day together in the country. A Scanlon brother stood for the United States Government and the majesty of law, and propriety demanded his presence as peremptorily as a chaperon for a young lady. A Scanlon brother could be useful, too, in climbing cocoanut trees, rubbing sticks together when the matches were lost, and in guiding them to noble waterfalls far hidden in the forest.

In this manner nearly a whole year passed, which, for the little consul, represented an unavoidable monthly outlay of fifty-five dollars. He got somewhat used to it, as everybody gets somewhat used to everything; but he could not resist certain recurring intervals of depression when he contrasted his present circumstances with his bygone glory. Fifty-five dollars a month made a big hole in a consular income, and he would gaze down that ten-year vista with a sinking heart. But relief was closer at hand than he had ever dared to hope.

From the Department? No, but from Satterlee himself.

The news was brought to little Skiddy early one morning. Alfred Scanlon, with an air of gloom, deprecatingly coughed his way into the bedroom, and handed the consul a letter. It was written on pale pink note-paper, of the kind Samoans like best, with two lavender love birds embossed in the corner. It was from Satterlee. The letter ran thus:

DEAR FRIEND: *When this reaches you I shall be far to sea. My excuse for so long subsisting on your bounty must be laid to my ignorance, which was only illuminated two days ago by accident. I had no idea that you were paying for me out of your own private purse, or that my ease and comfort were obtained at so heavy a cost to yourself. Regretfully I bring our pleasant relations to an end, impelled, I assure you, by the promptings of a heartfelt friendship. I loved the simple people among whom my lot was cast, and looked forward, at the termination of my sentence, to end the balance of my days peacefully among them. The world, seen from so great a distance, and from within so sweet a nest, frightened me, old stager that I am. God knows, I have never seen but its ugliest side, and return to it with profound depression. Kindly explain my abrupt departure to the Scanlons, and if you would do me a last favor, buy*

a little rocking-horse that there is at Edward's store, price three dollars, and present it in my name to my infant goddaughter, Apeli Scanlon. To them all kindly express my warmest and sincerest gratitude; and for yourself, dear friend, the best, the truest, the kindest of men, accept the warm grasp of my hand at parting. Ever yours,

JOHN SATTERLEE.

"It must have been the Hamburg bark that sailed last night," quavered Scanlon.

Of course, Skiddy blew that Scanlon up. He wiped the floor with him. He roared at him till the great hulking creature shook like jelly, and his round black eyes suffused with tears. He made him sit down then and there, swore him on the consular Bible, and made him dictate a statement, which was signed in the presence of the cook. This accomplished, Alfred was ingloriously dismissed, while the consul went out on the back veranda, and sat there in his pajamas, to think the matter over.

It seemed a pity to rouse the Department. The Department's interest in Satterlee could at no time have been called brisk, and it had now ebbed to a negligible quantity. But it would be just like the Department to get suddenly galvanized, and hysterically head Satterlee off at Hamburg. This would mean his ultimate return to Samoa, and a

perpetual further outlay of fifty-five dollars from a hard-earned salary. No, he wouldn't worry the Department. . . . Let sleeping dogs lie. There were better ways of spending fifty-five dollars a month.

That night the consul had champagne at dinner, and drank a silent toast:

"Good luck to him, poor old devil!"

FORTY YEARS BETWEEN

"WHAT am I to enter in the log, sir?" asked Mr. Francis, the first lieutenant.

"There's an old-fashioned word for it," said Captain Hadow grimly.

"Had it been my brother it couldn't have hurt me more," said Mr. Francis.

"Everybody loved that boy."

"It will break his father's heart, sir."

"A deserter, by God!"

"He had everything in the world," said Francis, in the tone of a man who himself had fought hard for every step. "He had influence, money of his own, brains, a splendid professional future, everything!"

"All thrown away like that," said Captain Hadow, with a gesture of his hand.

"And the handsomest fellow I believe I ever saw," said Mr. Francis.

"The pick of the basket," agreed Hadow.

"And to think," continued Mr. Francis, "that I must sit down at my desk and write: 'Past Midshipman John de Vigne Garrard, Deserter.'"

The pair were pacing the quarter-deck of H.M.S. *Dauntless* as she lay at anchor within the reef.

It was at Borabora, one of the Society Islands, and the time forty years ago. The wonderful old rock, rising sheer naked and frowning from the bluest water in the world, seemed to those at its foot as though it were holding up the very sky itself. Precipice upon precipice dizzily scaled the basaltic heights, giving here and there, on little shelves and crannies, a foothold for a vivid vegetation. The peak itself, a landmark at sea for ninety miles around, was half-hidden in the gloom of squalls and scud, and sometimes, for a moment, it would be altogether lost to view in the fierce murkiness of driving rain. Below the mountain, on the flat shore of the lagoon, an uninterrupted belt of palms concealed the little villages of the islanders. Here, in idyllic peace, a population of extraordinary attractiveness, gentleness, and beauty led their life of secluded ease. Money was all but unknown; food could be had in abundance for the most trifling labor; clothes could be stripped from the bark of trees. Nature, giving with both hands, was repaid with an usury of poetry and song; and these happy people, children forever at heart, well mannered, gay, and instinct with an untamed nobility, bore themselves with the grace of those whom the gods loved.

"As like as not he is watching us now from somewhere up there," said the captain, sweeping the summits with his glass.

"I doubt it, sir," returned Mr. Francis. "It's my conviction he isn't a cable's length behind the village."

"Did you offer the reward?" asked the captain.

The first lieutenant looked embarrassed.

"I told you to offer fifty pounds," said the captain tartly.

"I ventured to raise it to a hundred, sir," said Mr. Francis. "We talked it over in the wardroom, and we thought we wouldn't risk the boy for a matter of a few pounds between us."

"I wonder if the mess would have done the same for *me*?" observed the captain.

"We hardly look forward to your putting yourself in that position, sir," said Mr. Francis.

"No, by God!" said the captain. "When I quit her Majesty's service it will be neither for pique nor for love."

"No, indeed, sir," agreed the first lieutenant.

"I've had my follies, too, Mr. Francis," said the captain. "Every man who is worth anything has some time or other made a fool of himself about a woman. I don't pretend to be better than my neighbors. I can't forget I was once young myself."

"I'm afraid even a hundred pounds isn't going to fetch him," said Mr. Francis. "I could see it in the king's eyes he meant to keep the boy."

"The lady in the case is the king's sister, I sup-

pose—" said the captain, "that tall slip of a girl who was always making such sheep's-eyes at Jack. Gad! I don't wonder he preferred a bower in Eden with her to the steerage of a man-of-war and a pack of young devils incarnate! Who knows what might not have happened if she had made sheep's-eyes at me, Mr. Francis!"

"Very true, sir, very true," returned Mr. Francis, who had no sense of humor.

"She's about the sweetest thing I ever saw," went on the captain.

The two men laughed.

"I hope to goodness he'll be the only one," said Mr. Francis. "The fact is, the whole ship's in love; evcn the lower deck is off its feed; the boatswain says they're messing up the rigging with true-lovers' knots, and I'm told the marines are writing poetry."

"Ah, if it had been anyone but him!" exclaimed the captain.

"It's horrible to call him a deserter," said Francis.

"Don't let's do it," said the captain.

"We have to say something, sir," returned the first lieutenant helplessly.

"One can always lie, I suppose," said Hadow.

"There's nothing I wouldn't do myself for Jack Garrard," volunteered Mr. Francis.

"Why not say he was kidnapped here by the

hill tribes?" said Hadow. "We aren't certain sure he wasn't, and no one can deny but what he might have been."

"But the admiral would be bound to inquire into it," said Mr. Francis. "Sooner or later he'd send a ship."

"Trust Jack to do his own lying when she gets here," said Hadow. "Besides, he'll be sick of the whole thing by that time and only too glad to step aboard."

"But won't we be asked why *we* didn't rescue him?" asked Francis.

"No, no—I have it!" cried the captain.

"It's certainly a case for stretching a point, sir," said Mr. Francis.

"Enter in the log," said the captain, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, "that Passed Midshipman John de Vigne Garrard, failing to report himself at the expiration of his leave, was afterwards discovered to have been kidnapped by the hill tribes of Borabora Island. On my threatening to land a party to recover him, I was dissuaded by King George, who cleared himself of any personal responsibility in the matter, and who promised, if only I would give him time, to recover the man without bloodshed or any cost to her Majesty's Government. The king urged that the use of force would imperil the officer's life, which otherwise he had every confidence would be spared."

"Very good, sir," said Mr. Francis.

"You'll give old George a flaming character," added Hadow.

"Very good, sir," said Mr. Francis.

"Pile it on about his reverence for the Queen, and the way he gave beef to the ship," said Hadow.

"And what then, sir?" inquired Mr. Francis.

"Well, you know," went on Hadow, "my orders down here leave me a pretty wide latitude. You can't tie down a surveying ship in wild waters the way you can a simple patrol. By God, sir, I'll put the ship back here in nine months and retake Master Johnny Garrard."

"If he has any realization of his position he will then go down on his knees and thank you, sir," said Mr. Francis.

"He's more likely to come aboard whistling!" exclaimed the captain.

"Of course, it will involve a little—insincerity," said Mr. Francis.

"You mean we'll have to lie like hell!" said the captain.

"Well, yes," observed Mr. Francis.

"I hope that's understood," said the captain. "But I can't bear to see a fine lad ruined for a bit of squeamishness. Were he thirty he might go hang; but nineteen— Good Lord! one must have a little mercy."

"Where would any of us be now, sir," said Mr.

Francis, "if we had each of us received full measure for a boyish error?"

"I know I was a rotten bad egg myself," said Captain Hadow.

"If I may say it without offense, sir," said Mr. Francis, "I think you are taking a very noble course in respect to this unfortunate lad."

"Of course, I don't want you to think I justify desertion," said Hadow quickly, not ill pleased at the compliment. "Gad, sir, it's a shocking thing; bar actual cowardice, I positively know nothing worse. Were Jack my son, I'd rather see him stretched dead at my feet. I tell you, Mr. Francis, that when I first heard the news I was stunned; I felt myself trembling; the dishonor, the infamy of it struck me here." Captain Hadow laid his hand on his heart.

Mr. Francis nodded a silent assent.

"But we'll save him!" cried the captain. "We won't permit this ugly business to blast his life."

"You may count, Captain Hadow, on our most loyal and hearty support," said Mr. Francis.

"Thank you," said the captain; "and you will pass the word along that the subject is one not to be discussed."

"Quite so, sir," said the first lieutenant.

"Not a word!" exclaimed the captain; "and of course you will cancel the reward before we sail. You might even coach old George a bit about the

hill tribes. But, of course, not a whisper that we're ever coming back."

"No, sir," said Mr. Francis.

"That must go no farther than you and me," said Hadow.

"It shall not, sir," returned the first lieutenant.

"We shall sail to-night at the turn of the tide," said the captain.

"Very good, sir," said Mr. Francis.

It was not nine months—it was fifteen, and some days to spare—before the *Dauntless* again raised the peak of Borabora and backed her main-yard off the settlement. In the course of that eventful year and a quarter she had zigzagged the whole chart of the eastern Pacific; and from French Frigate Shoals to Pitcairn, from Diamond Head to Little Rapa, she had sounded and plotted reefs innumerable, and had covered, with a searching persistency, vast areas of blue water dotted with e. d.'s and p. d.'s.[1] She had twice taken the ground, once so hard and fast that she had shifted her guns and lightered a hundred tons of stores among the gulls and mews of a half-sunken reef; she had had an affair with the unruly natives of the Walker Group, and had blown a village to fragments, and not a few of the Walkers themselves into a land

[1] "Existence doubtful; position doubtful," familiar contractions still on any Pacific chart.

as uncharted as their own; she had tried a beachcomber for murder, and had dangled him at the main yardarm, giving him later on a Church of England service, a hammock, and the use of a cannon ball at his feet; she had poked her nose into cannibal bays, where women of wild beauty and wilder license swam off to the ship in hundreds until the marines drove them back with muskets, and fired at their own comrades, who in their madness leaped into the water and were floated ashore in the arms of naked girls; she had lain for weeks in enormous atolls, where the only life was that of birds, and the silence was unbroken save for the long roll of the surf, and at night the ghostly scurrying of turtles over the sand; she had been everywhere in those labyrinthine seas, those haunts of romance and mystery, with love, danger, and death always close aboard.

It was morning when Hadow raised the island, a fleecy speck of cloud against the sky line, and he shortened sail at once and lingered out the day so as to bring him up to it by dark. After supper every light on board was doused, and the great hull, gliding through the glass-smooth water, merged her steep sides and towering yards and canvas into the universal shadow. With whispering keel and a wind so fair and soft that one wondered to see the sails stiffen in the bolt ropes, the man-of-war stole steadily to leeward, with no sound

but the occasional creak of cordage, or the hoarse murmur of voices from the lower deck. Hadow himself, pacing the quarter-deck in his boat cloak, was lost in reverie, while the wardroom and the steerage in unredeemed darkness held nothing but dozing men.

By ten the ship was hove to close ashore, and the lights of the little settlement glimmered through the palms. The warm night, laden with exotic fragrance and strangely exciting in the intensity of its stillness and beauty, hid beneath its far-reaching pall the various actors of an extraordinary drama. With pistols buckled to their hips, Brady, Winterslea, Hotham, and Stanbury-Jones, four officers of the ship, together with Hatch, a flinty-faced old seaman who could be trusted, all slipped down the ladder into the captain's gig and pulled with muffled oars for the break in the reef. Picking their way through the pass, with the surf on either hand roaring in their ears, they slowly penetrated the lagoon and headed for the king's house. The shelving beach brought them to a stop, and all jumping out to lighten the boat, they drew her over the shingle and made her painter fast to a *pandanus* tree. Then, acting in accordance with a preconcerted plan, Winterslea was sent forward to track down their prey, while the rest huddled together to await his return.

Ten minutes, twenty minutes passed in palpi-

tating suspense. A girl drew by wreathed in flowers; she looked out to sea, then up at the stars, and shrank again into the shadow. From the neighboring houses there came the sound of mellow voices and of laughter. A pig rooted and rustled among a heap of cocoanut shells. Half an hour passed, and from far across the water, as faint and silvery as some elfin signal, the ship sent her message of the time: six bells.

Panting and crouching, Winterslea groped his way among them.

"Come," he said.

They followed him in silence, unloosing their holsters and grimly ready. A pair of handcuffs clinked in Hatch's jumper. They inhaled the deep breath of tried and resolute men inured to danger, and accustomed to give and to receive an unflinching loyalty.

Winterslea, with keen perception, led the way like a bloodhound, skirting lighted houses and following devious inland paths. The comparative openness of the village began to give way to the ranker undergrowth of the plantations behind it. The path sank into a choking vegetation that stood on either side and brushed their faces as they followed in single file. A fallen tree gave them the passage of a stream.

"There!" said Winterslea.

The path opened out on a little clearing among

the trees, and showed them, set on high, the outlines of a native house. Like all Tahitian houses, it was on the model of a bird cage, and the oval wall of bamboos, set side by side, let through vertical streaks of light from the lamp or fire within. As the whole party drew nearer, they heard, deep below them on the other side, the pleasant sound of falling water, and realized the cliff they were mounting overlooked a little river at its foot. Here, in exquisite seclusion, Jack Garrard had chosen the spot for his moral suicide.

Creeping up to the house and looking through the cracks of the bamboos, his comrades had view of him within. Dressed like a native in *tapa* cloth, with bare chest, and flowers in his tawny hair, the handsome boy was seated in a hammock. With her head against his knee, a beautiful girl was looking up into his face, one hand locked in his. In that land of pretty women she was the one that outshone them all—Tehea, the sister of the king, for whose sweet favor every man on board had sought in vain. And here she was, with her long hair loosened and her eyes swimming with love, looking up at the lad who had given name and honor to win her heart. The pair were hardly more than children; and Brady, a sentimentalist of forty, with red hair, sighed as he peeped through the eaves and thought of his own dear girl at home.

Garrard laid down the pipe he had been smoking,

and, in happy unconsciousness of any audience but the woman at his feet, began to sing. His voice had always been his greatest charm, and the means of gaining him the friendship of men much older than himself. It had won Hadow; it had won Francis. There was not a blue-jacket on board the *Dauntless* but whose eyes had moistened under the spell of Jack's clear tenor. No one could render with such delicacy, purity, and sentiment those ballads, now so old-fashioned, that used to solace our seafaring fathers in the fifties.

Jack lay back in the hammock, and with wonderful tenderness and feeling sang "Afton Water," repeating the last verse several times over. It was plain that something in it, some phrase or line, had deeply moved him, for he suddenly bent over and laid his face in his hands, shaking with a strange emotion. Tehea rose, and throwing her arms round his neck and forcing away his hands, pressed her lips to his wet eyes. Even as she did so Brady gave the signal for the whole party to move round to the entrance. He passed through first, the others close behind him. Jack leaped to his feet, white and speechless, his wide-open eyes those of an animal at bay. Brady, Winterslea, Stanbury-Jones, Hotham, Hatch, the familiar faces, daunted him like the sight of ghosts. Friends no longer, they were now avengers, with the right to track him down and kill him.

"Jack leaped to his feet, white and speechless."

UNIV. OF MICH.

"Jack!" cried Brady in a stifled voice.

The lad took a step back. The girl moaned, and tried to run between Hatch and Stanbury-Jones. The old seaman caught and shook her like a dog, tearing away the whistle she put to her lips and dashing it on the floor. Jack put up his hand and snatched a pistol hidden in the thatch of the roof. Brady, on the instant, leveled his own and thundered out:

"Drop it, or I'll shoot!"

"Shoot, and be damned!" returned Jack, and with that he turned his pistol on himself, and, placing the muzzle against his forehead, pulled the trigger.

It missed fire.

Before he could try again Brady had caught him round the neck, while Hatch, resigning the girl to Stanbury-Jones, ran in and snapped the handcuffs on his wrists.

"Jack," cried Brady, "we aren't going to hurt you. We're rescuing you from the hill tribes. Man, you're saved!"

"You never was no deserter," said Hatch.

"Mind you back us up, old fellow," said Winterslea.

"Give us your fin, boy," said Hotham.

It was some time before Jack could pull himself together. When at last he did so, and began to appreciate the generosity of his captain and ship-

mates and their astounding concern to save him from the penalty of his crime, he underwent one of those reactions when despair gives way to the maddest gayety. He swore at Hatch, and made him take off the irons; he got out a bottle of white rum and forced them all to drink his health; he kept them in a roar with the story of his adventures, and laughed and cried in turn as he described his life ashore.

"What does she want?" demanded Brady, as Tehea insistently repeated some words in native.

"She says," said Jack, calmly picking up the whistle from the floor and touching it to his lips, "she says I've only to blow this and you will all be dead in five minutes."

A hush fell upon the company.

Jack, with an oath, flung the whistle from him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am grateful. I am damned grateful! If I live I shall try and repay each one of you. I shall try and be a better man. I shall try to be worthy of your kindness."

He went round and shook hands solemnly with every one of them. "Damned grateful!" he repeated.

"Let's be off," said Brady.

"Now, lad, your word of honor," said Winterslea. Jack looked about him helplessly.

"I suppose I've no right to ask such a thing," he said. "I know how good you've been to me

already, and all that. But—but, gentlemen, she's my wife. I love her. I shall never see her again. May I not entreat a minute to myself?"

"No," said Brady.

Jack went over to Tehea and took her hand. He put his arms about her, and, unashamed before them all, pressed her comely head against his breast. He tried to explain the inexorable fate he was so powerless to resist; in incoherent whispers he told her he would break his chains and return to her, free in the years to come to devote his life to the woman he loved. He called her the dearest names, and begged her not to forget him. But she, with a perception greater than his own, swept away these despairing protestations with disdain. The daughter of one king, the sister of another, could she not meet force by force? These fierce intruders, with their rough voices and drawn pistols, who were they, to threaten a princess of the royal blood and carry away her lover before her eyes? If they were strong, she was stronger; and what ship cannon, she asked, however murderous or far-ranging, could penetrate those mountain recesses whither she would carry him before the morning? Ah, she said, it was for him to choose between her and them; between Britain and the island; between love and the service of the white Queen beyond the seas.

"I have chosen," he said.

Her eyes flashed as she freed herself from his arms.

"I am hateful in my own sight for having loved you," she said.

"Will you not even wish me well, Tehea?" he asked.

"No," she cried, "I hope you will die!"

He turned away.

"*Siati!*" she cried after him in agony.

He turned back to her, downcast and silent.

"Remember," she said with sweet relenting, "that wherever thou goest, however many the years that may divide us, however wide the waters or the land, I shall be here waiting for thee, here in this house of our happiness; and if I die before thou comest here thou wilt find my grave."

"Tehea," he said, "as God sees me, some day I shall return!"

She took his hands and looked up into his face with such poignant longing and tenderness, that Jack's comrades, already uncomfortable enough, were quite overborne by the scene. Tough old Hatch snuffled audibly, and Brady could hardly speak.

"Come, come, lad," he cried huskily, "you mustn't keep us longer!"

Jack unclasped the girl's hands and suffered himself to be led away by his comrades. Stumbling and falling against one another in the dark, they

made shift to find the uncertain path, Winterslea, in the lead, coo-eeing like a bushfellow for them to follow. Little by little they gained the sleeping village, and pressed on to the beach beyond, where their boat was already afloat on the incoming tide. They took their places without a word and pulled out in the direction of the ship. In the pass, rising and falling in the heavy swell, they burned a blue light, which the *Dauntless* answered with another, and ran up a masthead lantern to guide them. A few minutes later they clambered up the ladder, the boat was hoisted in, and the boatswain's whistle was rousing the watch on deck:

"Mainsail haul!"

By morning the island had sunk behind them, and standing on the dizzy main-royal yard with one arm round the mast, Jack could make out nothing but a little cloud on the horizon.

At sixty, John Garrard was a post captain, a Knight Commander of the Bath, and within a year of receiving flag rank and the command of a fleet. His career had been more than distinguished, and he had won his way to the front as much by his fine personal qualities as by his invariable good judgment and high professional attainments. He had earned the character of a man who could be trusted in situations involving tact, temper, and diplomatic skill; and no captain in the navy was more confidently ordered to those scenes of inter-

national tension, which, in spite of statesmen, so often arise in some distant place to menace the peace of the world.

He had never married, and when rallied on the subject was wont to say with a laugh that the sea was his only mistress. No one had ever ventured to question him much further, though his friends were often piqued, especially the women, as to an implied romance in the captain's earlier life. It was known he supported two old-maid sisters, the Misses Hadow, the impoverished daughters of his first commander; but in view of his considerable private fortune this drain on his resources seemed scarcely the reason of his renunciation. Nor did it seem to his admirers that any woman could have had the heart to refuse him, for even at sixty he was a noticeably handsome man, and was endowed, besides, with more than the advantage of good looks, a charm of manner, a distinction, a captivating gallantry that made him everywhere a favorite.

He was in command of the *Inflexible* battleship, one of the Australian squadron, when she developed some defects in her hydraulic turning gear and was ordered home to England by Admiral Lord George Howard for overhaul. The captain's heart beat a little faster as he realized his course would take him south of the Societies. He spread out the chart on his cabin table and sighed as he laid his

finger on Borabora. He shut his eyes, and saw the basaltic cliffs, the white and foaming reefs, the green, still forests of that unforgotten island. He was a boy once more, with flowers in his hair, wandering beneath the palms with Tehea. How often had he thought of her during all these years; the years that had left him gray and old; the years that had carried him unscathed through so many dangers in every quarter of the world! For him she was still in her adorable girlhood, untouched by time, a radiant princess in her radiant isle, waiting by the shore for his return. It shocked him to remember she was not far short of sixty—a fat old woman, perhaps, married to some strapping chief, and, more than likely, with grown children of her own! How incredible it seemed!

But a word, and he might land and see her. But a word, and the questions of forty years might yet be answered—answered, yes, to shatter, as like as not, with pitiless realities the tender figment of a dream. No, he said, he dared not expose himself to a possible disillusion, to play into the hands of sardonic nature, ever mocking at man. No; but he would carry his ship close inshore and watch from the bridge the unfolding bays and tiny settlements of that lost paradise, and then, dipping his flag to his vanished youth, he would sink over the horizon, his memory thrilled and his sentiment unimpaired, to set his face for England.

Dawn was breaking as he slowed down to leeward of the island and watched the shadows melt away. It was Sunday, a day of heavenly calm, fresh yet windless, with a sea so smooth that the barrier reefs for once were silent, and one could hear, far across the hushed and shining water, the coo of pigeons in the forest. Under bare steerage way, with the leadsman droning in the fore chains, the ship hugged the shore and steamed at a snail's pace round the island. On the lofty bridge, high above the wondering faces of his command, the white-haired captain, impassive, supreme, and solitary, gave no sign of those inner emotions that were devouring him. Along the shore the sight of the battleship brought out here and there a startled figure or a group; a couple of laughing girls, astride on ponies, raced the *Inflexible* for a mile, and then, their road ending in a precipice, threw kisses with their saucy hands; little children ran out into the lagoon, shouting with joy; old men, in Sunday *pariu*s and with black Bibles under their arms, turned their solemn eyes to seaward and forgot for a moment the road to church. A white man, in striped pajamas, was surprised at morning coffee on the veranda of his little house. He darted inside, and reappeared with a magazine rifle which he emptied in the air, and followed up his courtesies by raising and lowering a Union Jack the size of a handkerchief. The battleship

dipped her stately white ensign in acknowledgment, as a swan might salute a fly, and swept on with majesty.

With every mile the bays and wooded promontories grew increasingly familiar as Sir John was borne toward Lihua, the scene of his boyish folly. He looked ashore in wonder, surprised at the vividness and exactness of his recollection. He might have landed anywhere and found his way through those tangled, scented paths with no other guide but memory. There was Papaloloa with its roaring falls; there, the ti'a a Peau where he had shot his first goat; yonder, the misty heights of Tiarapu, where Tehea and he had camped a night in the clouds in an air of English cold. It was like a home-coming to see all these familiar scenes spreading out before him. He looked at his hands, his thin, veined, wrinkled hands, and it came over him with a sort of wonder that he was an old man.

"That was forty years ago," he said to himself. "Forty years ago!"

And yet, by God! it all seemed like yesterday.

As Lihua opened out and he perceived, with an inexpressible pang, the thatched houses set deep in the shade of palms and breadfruit trees, he felt himself in the throes of a strange and painful indecision. He paced up and down the bridge; he lit a cigar and threw it away again; he twice approached Captain Stillwell as though to give an

order, and then, still in doubt, turned shamefacedly on his heel.

"By the deep nine!" came the hoarse murmur of the leadsman.

It lay with him to stop the ship or not; a word, and she would come shivering to a standstill; a word, and the boatswain would pipe away his gig and the crew would be running to their places. His heart ached with the desire to land, but something, he knew not what, withheld the order on his lips. Let him remain silent, and the opportunity would pass away forever; it was passing now with every turn of the propeller. Had he not told her he would return? Had he not whispered it that night when they were torn apart? Did he not owe it to her to keep the promise of forty years, a promise given in the flush of youth and hope, and sealed with scalding tears?

His resolution was taken. He ordered Captain Stillwell to stop the ship and lower a boat.

"I am going to treat myself to a run ashore," he said by way of explanation.

The vessel slowly stopped. The covers were whipped off the gig. She was hoisted out and lowered, the crew dropping down the ladder into their places at the peep-peep-peep of the whistle.

"I leave the ship," said Sir John, not to convey a fact patently obvious, but in obedience to a naval formula.

He was landed at a little cove where in bygone days he had often whiled away an hour waiting in charge of Hadow's boat. It gave him a singular sensation to feel the keel grate against the shingle, and to find himself once more setting foot in Lihua. He drew a deep breath as he looked about and noticed how unchanged it all was. There were some new houses in new places, and grass on the sites of others that were endeared to him in recollection; but it was Lihua, after all, the Lihua of his boyhood, the Lihua of his dreams. For a while he strolled about at random, walking with the phantoms of the past, hearing their laughter, seeing their faces, recalling a thousand things he had forgotten.

It came over him with a start that the village was empty. Then he remembered it was Sunday, and they were all in church. Thank God, there was none to watch him; no prying, curious eyes to disturb his thoughts. But they would soon be out again, and it behooved him to make the best use of his solitude while he might. He struck inland, his heart beating with a curious expectancy; at every sound he held his breath, and he would turn quickly and look back with a haunting sense that Tehea was near him; that perhaps she was gazing at him through the trees. He approached his old home through overgrown plantations. It awed him to part the branches and to feel himself drawing nearer at every step to the only house he

had ever called his own. As he heard the splashing waterfall he stopped, not daring for the moment to go on. When at last he did so, and mounted the little hill, he found no house at all; nothing but ferns and weeds, man-high. He moved about here and there, up to the armpits in verdure, in a sort of consternation at discovering it gone.

His foot struck against a boulder.

He had forgotten there were any rocks on the hill. He moved along, and his foot struck again. He pressed the weeds back and looked down. He saw a tomb of crumbling cement, green with age and buried out of sight under the tangle.

It had never occurred to him before that Tehea might be dead.

He held back the undergrowth again and peered into the depths. Yes, it was the grave of a chief, or of a woman of rank, one of those artless mounds of cement and rock that the natives, with poetic fancy, used to call *falelauasi,* houses of sandal-wood; *oliolisanga,* or the place where birds sing; or, in vulgar speech, simply *tuungamau,* or tombs. These words, unspoken, unthought of for forty years, lost, overlaid, and forgotten in some recess of his brain, now returned to him with tormenting recollection. He laid both hands on the thick stem of a shrub and tore it out of the ground. He seized another and dragged it out with the same ferocity. It was intolerable that she should suffocate under

all this warm, wet jungle; he would give her air and sunshine, she that had loved them both; he would uncover the poor stones that marked her last resting place; he would lay bare the earth that wrapped her dead beauty.

He worked with desperation until his hands were bleeding, until his eyes were stung and blinded with the streaming sweat. Dizzy with the heat, parched with thirst, and sick with the steam that rose from the damp ground, he was forced again and again to desist and rest. He cut his waistcoat into slips and bound them round his bloody hands; he broke the blades of his penknife on recalcitrant roots that defied the strength of his arms; he labored with fury to complete the task he had set before him. Here he stood, within four walls of vegetation, the sky above him, the cracked and rotted tomb below, satisfied at last by the accomplishment of his duty. The gold on his sleeves was dirty and disordered; one of his shoulder-straps dangled loose from his sodden coat; his trousers were splashed with earth. But for the moment the post captain was forgotten in the man, as he mused on the tragedy of human life, on the mysteries of love and death and destiny, on his own irrevocable youth now so far behind him, when he had forfeited his honor for the dead woman at his feet. He called her aloud by name. He bent down and kissed her mossy bed. He whispered,

with a strange conviction that she could hear him, that he had kept his promise to return.

Then, rising to his feet, he turned toward the sea and retraced his steps. The people were still in church, and the village was deserted as before. He walked swiftly lest they might come flocking out before he could reach his boat, to torture him with recognition, with the questions they would ask, with their story of Tehea's death. Then he laughed at his own fears, remembering his white hair and the intervening generation. Time had passed over Borabora, too. The world, he remembered, was older by forty years—older and sadder and emptier.

He swung himself up the ladder, mounted the bridge, and put the vessel on her course. The telegraph rang, the engineers repeated back the signal, and the great battleship, vibrating with her mighty engines, resumed once more her ponderous way.

O'S HEAD

SILVER TONGUE loved Rosalie, and Rosalie loved Silver Tongue, and ever since they had first met at the Taufusi Club dance their friends had seen the inevitable finish of their acquaintance. They were invited everywhere together, and the affair had progressed from the first or furtive stage to the secondary or solemn Sunday drive about the Eleele Sa. The third, that of carpenters adding a story to the bakery and dressmakers hard at work in Miss Potter's little establishment, was looming up close in view.

Never was a match in Apia that gave a rosier promise of success. Silver Tongue, so called by the Samoans on account of his beautiful voice (but who in ordinary life answered to the homelier appellation of Oppenstedt), had been making a very good thing out of the Southern Cross Bakery, and was regarded throughout Apia as a man of responsibility and substance. He was a tall, spare German of about forty, who, like the most of us, had followed the sea before fate had brought him to the islands, there in years gone by to marry a Samoan maid and settle down. The little Samoan

had died, leaving behind her nothing but a memory in Silver Tongue's heart, a tangled grave in the foreign cemetery, and a host of relations who lived in tumble-down quarters in the rear of the bakery. In one way and another these hungry mouths must have been a considerable drain on Silver Tongue's resources; and though they feebly responded to his bounty—one by driving a natty cart and delivering hot morning rolls, and another by pilfering firewood for the furnace—the account (if one had been made) was far from even. But to any objection to this Quixotic generosity Silver Tongue had a reply ever ready on his lips. "I lofe dem like my fader," he would say in his deep, fluty voice, and the conversation was seldom carried further. When it was—by some one ill advised enough to do so—Silver Tongue would flare up, and recall with flashing eyes and a face crimson with indignation the ten-year debt of gratitude he owed his dead wife's *ainga*.

Indeed, if Silver Tongue had a fault it was a certain moroseness and fierceness of temper, a readiness and even an apparent pleasure in taking offense, that made him somewhat of a solitary in our midst and threw him more than ever on the companionship of his own Kanakas; so that at night, when one had occasion to seek him out, he was usually to be found on the mats of his native house, smoking his pipe or playing *sweepy* with his

bulky father-in-law, Papalangi Mativa. I doubt if he had another intimate in Apia besides myself, and though I must confess we often disagreed, and once or twice approached the verge of estrangement, I was too much his friend and too mindful of the old days on the *Ransom* to let such trifles come between us.

I was, besides, Rosalie's friend as well, for old Clyde, her father, had died in my arms at Nonootch, and with his last breath had consigned her to my care. This obligation, rendered sacred by an association that extended back to the days of Steinberg and Bully Hayes, when in the *Moroa* and the *Eugenie* we had slept under the same mats and had played our part together in the stirring times of Stewart and the great Atuona Plantation —this obligation, I say, I met easily enough so long as Rosalie was a child and safe in the convent at Savalalo. But when she grew to womanhood and went to live with her relations in their shanty near the Firm, I began to experience some anxiety in regard to her. Her relations, to begin with, were not at all the kind of natives I liked. They had been too long the hangers-on of the Firm, and had seen too much of a low class of whites to be the proper guardians of a very pretty half-caste of eighteen. They had an ugly name, besides—but I won't be censorious—and it may have been all beach talk. But they were certainly a whining,

begging lot, the girls bold and the men impudent and saucy, and I never saw Rosalie in their midst but it made me heartsick for her future.

I did the little I could, and let it be pretty well understood about the beach that the man who played fast and loose with her would have to reckon with old Captain Branscombe. And then I got the missionary ladies to take her up, and as I never stinted a bit of money for her dresses and what not (as though Clyde's daughter wasn't worthy of the best in the land), she made good headway in what little gayeties took place in the town. Of course, I went about to keep an eye on her—that is, when they asked me to their parties, which wasn't always; and I remember once making very short work of one fellow, a labor captain from the Westward who seemed bent on mischief till I took him out in the starlight and showed him the business end of my gun. To tell the truth, I never had a peaceful moment till he up anchor and cleared, for he was a good deal the kind of man I was at thirty, and he hung on in spite of me, keeping half the family in his pay while I kept the other, and he ever landed the last night with muffled oars, when, instead of finding Rosalie on the beach to fly with him, he ran into *me,* laying for him under an umbrella!

There were many who said I was in love with the girl myself, which, as like as not, was true

for she was one of those tall, queenly women, with a wonderful grace to anything she did, and magnificent dark eyes, and a way of smiling,—brilliant, arch, and tender—that made even an old stager of sixty remember he still wore a heart under his jumper. Yes, I had a pretty soft spot for Rosalie, though I had sense enough to know that God had never meant her for an old sea horse like myself. And lacking me—whom the weight of three-score years had put out of the ring (not but what I'm a pretty game old devil yet)—I could see nobody in sight I preferred half so much as Silver Tongue.

So there was the situation till the war of Ninety-three came along to jumble us all up and knock everything to spillikins. Oppenstedt in love with Rosalie; Rosalie in love with Oppenstedt; Bahn and old Taylor working on the second story of the Southern Cross Bakery; Miss Potter doing double tides at the trousseau, and I, the friend of both, with a six-hundred-dollar piano on the way from Bremen for their wedding present. A fair wind, port in sight, and (say you) everything drawing nicely alow and aloft. So it was till that wretched fight at Vaitele, when the Vaimaunga came pouring in at dusk, bearing wounded, chorusing their songs, and tossing in the air above them the heads of their dead enemies. It made me feel bad to see it all, for to me these people were children, and it seemed horrible they should kill one another;

and it made me sicker still to watch the wounded carried into the Mission and stretched out in rows on the blood-stained boards. Though not a drinking man, I braced up at Peter's bar and then went on to pass the time of day with Oppenstedt.

I found him, as usual, on the mats of the native house, glumly smoking a pipe and talking politics with Papalangi Mativa. His lean, dark, handsome face was overcast, his eyes uneasy, and had I not known him for a brave man I should have thought that he was frightened. He was certainly very curt and short in greeting me, and I had a dim perception that my visit was unwelcome.

"This is a black business, Silver Tongue," I said; though, to be exact, I called him Leoalio, which means the same thing in native.

"Plack!" he exclaimed. "It's horrible! It's disgusting! They have been cutting off beople's heads!"

"Fourteen by one count," I said; "twenty-two by another."

"Gabtain," said he with a look of extraordinary gravity, "dere's worse nor that!"

"Worse?" I said.

"I have it straight from Papalangi Mativa himself."

"Have what?" I asked.

"Excellency," said Papalangi Mativa, "perhaps it is not high-chief-known to thee that I and mine

"'This is a black business, Silver Tongue,' I said."

come from a noble Savai'i stock, and that the son of my mother's sister, a stripling named O, numbered himself among the enemy and was to-day killed and his head taken on the field of Vaitele."

"*Aue!*" I said, which in Kanaka is being sympathetic.

"Dat is not all," said Silver Tongue. "Listen, gabtain!"

"I'm listening," I said.

"The warrior that killed O was To'oto'o, the *matai*," continued Papalangi Mativa with the air of one announcing the end of the world.

"To'oto'o!" I said in all innocence.

"To'oto'o," cried Silver Tongue; "why, Rosalie's uncle, the *faipule*, in whose house this very minute the head of my murdered relation lies!"

"'Pon my soul," I exclaimed, "this is really unfortunate!"

"Unfordunate!" cried Silver Tongue; "is it with such a word you describe two hearts broken, two lives plasted, the fairest prospect with suddenly crash the curdain led down!"

"I don't know what you're talking about," I said. "It's disagreeable, I admit, but I can't see what difference it can make to you and Rosalie."

"An Oppenstedt," said Silver Tongue, "could never indermarry with the family of a murderer, and least of all with a family that had the head of my dead wife's relation cut off and carried with

gapers and cries of joy down the main street of Apia and past my place of peeziness!"

"Do you mean to say it's all off with you and Rosalie?" I demanded.

Silver Tongue nodded grimly. "All off," he said.

"And you're going to break my girl's heart," I cried with what I think, under the circumstances, was a very justifiable indignation, "because the son of the aunt of your father-in-law has had his head cut off by poor Rosalie's adopted uncle?"

"That's right," said Silver Tongue.

"Old friend," I said, "let me go before I say something I might regret." I got up without waiting for any answer and strode into the street, too consumed with anger to utter another word. I walked along the beach, stopping here and there to discuss the news of the battle with those of my friends I happened to meet, until at last I passed Savalalo and drew near To'oto'o's house at Songi. Rosalie was standing at the gate, and when she saw me she ran up, threw her arms round my neck and kissed me. I had never known her so excited or so gay, and even in the dark I could see that her beautiful eyes were shining.

"Captain," she said, giving me a hug, "nobody will ever say a word against To'oto'o again, or try to belittle him as they used to, just because he's poor and lives on Seu's land, for to-day he fought like a lion and covered himself with glory!"

"Took a head, or something?" I said.

"A hero!" she exclaimed. "They are composing a song in his honor; all Songi is ringing with his name; and he was complimented for his valor by the President and Chief Justice! You must come in and see it at once."

"See what?" I asked.

"The head!" she cried.

I haven't the heart to write how the news was broken to Rosalie, who steadfastly refused to believe the truth until she had heard it from Silver Tongue himself. I had hoped he might relent, with a night to think it over and a letter from myself in the morning pointing out his injustice and folly. Perhaps, now I remember it, that letter was a mistake. It was a trifle warm in spots, and I dare say I let a natural irritation get the better of me. Be that as it may, Oppenstedt was deaf to reason and protested with undiminished vehemence that he refused to ally himself with the family of a murderer. Indeed, so ridiculous did he get on the subject that he sent to Sydney for a tombstone (I daren't write headstone, though it was one, about the size of a silk hat) and put it behind the bakery above the spot where O's head was buried in a gin case.

When a girl has gone a certain length she seems less able than a man to withstand a disappointment

in love. Silver Tongue simply clenched his teeth, withdrew from the Concordia Club and the Wednesday night bowls at Conrad's, and went on baking bread and rolls much as usual. Poor Rosalie drooped like a flower in the sun, and though she had pride enough to act a part and show a becoming spirit before the world, she had received a wound that I sometimes feared might prove mortal. I sent her to Tonga Taboo for a month, and she came back no better, her eyes black ringed and her cheeks hollow, and her smile (always to me the most beautiful smile in the world), with a curious, haunting pathos that I remember so well in the old slaving days among the Line women in their chains.

You must not think I tamely acquiesced in this state of affairs, or allowed my old friend an undisturbed possession of the Kanaka quarters behind the bakery. Late or early I gave him no peace, and plagued him, I dare say, to the very verge of distraction. But I might as well have tried to argue with his bread or soften his brick furnace for any impression I succeeded in making upon him. In his crazy obstinacy he would listen to nothing, and I would find myself, after one of these interviews, in a state of indescribable exasperation and determined never to go near him again.

One night, when I was up at Malifa calling on a dear good friend of mine, Sasa French, a charming

and most accomplished young native lady, our talk happened to run for the thousandth time on this vexing matter of Rosalie and Silver Tongue. All of a sudden an idea came into Sasa's pretty head—one of those brilliant, clever, feminine ideas—that seemed to us, in that triumphant moment, to be the means of untangling all our difficulties. Though it was eight o'clock, and there was the risk of gossip in my driving Sasa French alone about the Municipality at such an hour, I put her into my buggy, whipped up my horse, and set a straight course for Seumanutafa, the high chief of Apia. He laughed a good deal, demurred somewhat, and was finally persuaded to squeeze his Herculean dimensions into the trap and start off with us for To'oto'o's house at Songi. Here, after the usual ceremonious exchanges, the womenfolk and children melted away and left us alone with To'oto'o, whose ferretty eyes betrayed no small degree of curiosity and alarm. This man was one of the few Samoans I never liked. He was a gaunt, dangerous, crafty-looking customer of about fifty, and I never had had any use for him since he had stolen my tethering rope one evening when I was calling on the king. Well, to get on with my story, we talked about the weather, and the war, and what an ass the Ta'ita'ifono was, and finally got round to the matter in hand.

Seumanutafa began mild, for he was a past mas-

ter in the art of graduation, and thought to go slow at first. To'oto'o was informed that he had to make *ifonga* for the death of O and be carried on the morrow by the *taulelea* to Papalangi Mativa's house behind the bakery. This *ifonga,* as they call it, is a sort of public humiliation to expiate a fault, and nobody's very keen about doing it unless they have to—for it involves rubbing dirt in your hair, and singing small, and suffering a sort of social eclipse for a week or two afterwards. To'oto'o's face grew several shades darker at the suggestion, and though I promised him twenty dollars out of hand for himself and two kegs of beef and three tins of biscuit by way of peace offering to Papalangi Mativa, he hemmed and hawed and finally said no.

Then Sasa bore a hand and spoke beautifully of Rosalie, and how this unfortunate business of O's head had divided her from Silver Tongue.

"If thou makest peace with his *ainga,*" said Sasa, "lo, what is there left for the white man to say? His bond is that of marriage; theirs, that of blood; and if the last be satisfied, what room is there for the former to complain?"

"But to be carried like a pig through the public street!" cried To'oto'o. "Preferable far would be death itself than that the son of chiefs should be thus degraded, and his name become a mock throughout the Tuamasanga!"

"O To'oto'o," said Seumanutafa, "we know thee for a brave man, and that thou tookst this head in open battle, even as David did that of Goliath, and I swear thee thy honor shall remain undimmed for all the seeming appearance of humiliation. Besides, is it not written in the Holy Book that thou shouldst turn the other cheek to the smiter? Is it not said also that blessed is the peacemaker, and that the meek shall inherit the earth?"

"Weighty is my grief and pain," said To'oto'o, "but what your Highness asks of me is impossible!"

"O To'oto'o," said Seumanutafa, "this house is mine; this land is mine; the plantation *i uta* is mine also. Thou livest under the shadow of my power, and it is meet thou shouldst pay in service for the bounty thou hast so long enjoyed. First I spoke to thee as one brave man to another; then as a Christian to a fellow-Christian; now I command thee as thy chief, and verily thou shalt obey!"

"And I will add to that twenty, making it twenty-five," I said.

"And Rosalie shall marry her Silver Tongue after all," said Sasa.

To'oto'o argued a little more for form's sake, and blustered somewhat about the Chief Justice, and how he would fight the matter out in the courts; but Seumanutafa's tone grew peremptory, and the old fellow finally gave way all round.

Then *'ava* was brought in, the arrangements made for the morrow, and we at length said *tofa* on the threshold, well pleased with our night's work.

I wish you could have seen us next day going through the town in a little procession, headed by To'oto'o lashed to a pole and borne by a crowd of retainers. There was a flavor of the burial of Sir John Moore about the whole business—especially the hush—and not a funeral note being heard; we marching with measured tread, the municipal police bringing up the rear, and Seumanutafa in the center, nearly seven feet high, and bearing a white umbrella above his stately head.

Silver Tongue was standing in the front of his shop having an altercation with the Chief Justice about a ham (for he did a little in groceries as well as baked) as we hove in sight and began to file down the lane to Papalangi Mativa's quarters behind the Southern Cross Bakery. I suppose Silver Tongue thought our man was hurt, or something, for he came running after us with a bottle of square-face and a packet of first aid to the wounded, elbowing his way excitedly through the crowd to where we had deposited To'oto'o at the feet of Papalangi Mativa. He was the most astonished baker in the South Seas as he saw who lay there in the jumble of beef and biscuit, and for a moment was too stupefied to let out a word.

I don't mean to go into the speech-making part of the performance, for what between Seumanutafa and Papalangi Mativa, and the talking-man Sasa had lent me for the occasion, and a divinity student who happened along, and somebody who said he was Fale Upolu and spoke for the entire Group, and an aged *faipule* from the Union Islands who seemed to have some kind of a grievance about his father's head, and the Chief Justice who had to butt in with the capitation tax—we were kept there a matter of three hours or more, until at last the principals officially made it up, To'oto'o was forgiven, and everything ended happily.

"Now, Silver Tongue," I said as the meeting dispersed, "we'll consider that head affair canceled, and if you'll come over to my house to-night I dare say you'll find Rosalie sitting on the front veranda!"

"And do you for a moment think," he said with a strange, writhen smile, "dat all dis talk and domfoolery will a gruel murder undo, and the young man cut off in his brime restore? Weel those lips, so gold in death, stir, think you, in the box where we laid him? Will my dead wife's family be less bereaved because of two kegs of peef and three tins of biscuit, or Rosalie's family less disgraced because her uncle was triced through the streets like a big? No, Gaptain Branscombe, I'm only a poor paker, but I'd count myself a traidor

to my family were I to dake a murderess for my pride!"

"Rosalie isn't a murderess," I said.

"I meant niece of a murderer," he returned.

I was too speechless with indignation to utter another word. In the course of sixty years on this planet I've seen many kinds of men, and I've learned to detect in some a certain look about the eyes—a curious light and a far-away dreaminess of expression—that seems always the sign or mark of an unflinching obstinacy. I remember that self-same look on Brand's face as we lay all flattened on the water tanks of the *Moroa*, and he blew the main deck off the ship together with three hundred human beings; and I guess the Christian martyrs had it, too, when lions tore them to pieces and bulls kited them on their horns in the Colossium. Anyway, it was as plain as daylight that I had lost my time and money in bothering about Oppenstedt, and that I might as well give him up as the most incorrigible, stiff-necked, self-opinionated, blunder-headed ass and lunatic this side of Muggin.

I gave him a wide berth after this, and took the other side of the street when I saw him coming; while he, for his part, would have cheerfully run a mile for the chance of avoiding me. I had cares of my own, too, about this time, what with the loss of the *Daisy Walker*, and my libel suit with Grevsmuhl, and other things to think about than

that of bringing twin souls together. So the days drifted on and months came and went, and it seemed all over for good between Rosalie and Silver Tongue. Then that labor captain turned up again, him I had had trouble with before, a black-eyed, fierce, handsome little fellow, who was hotter than ever after my girl. Rosalie was just in the humor to do something awful, for she was desperately unhappy, with spells of wild gayety between, and a recklessness about herself that frightened me more than I can tell. She laughed in my face when I warned her about the labor captain, and told me straight out she was only a half-caste and it didn't matter what became of her. And from the way she carried on and got herself talked about from one end of the beach to the other, it began to look as though she meant what she said. Altogether I felt pretty blue about her, and savage enough against Silver Tongue to have—Well, what on earth could I do? What could anybody do? Why had God ever made such a silly ass of a baker?

One day I got a note from Sasa French that took me up to Malifa at a tearing run. Scanlon, the half-caste policeman, was there, and when I had listened to his story I threw my hat in the air and shouted like a boy, and Sasa and I waltzed up and down the veranda to the petrifaction of two missionary ladies who happened to be passing in

tow of some square-toes from the Home Society. Sasa and I plumped into a buggy, and with Scanlon on horseback pounding behind us we made all sail for Seumanutafa's. Bidding him follow, we then raced off to Mulinu'u, where, sure enough, we found a young man named Tautala in one of the houses, who brought out the music box and very soon satisfied me as to the truth of what Scanlon had said. Then at a slower pace, so that Tautala might keep up with us, we walked to To'oto'o's house and taxed him with the whole business!

At first he made some show of denying it, but what could he say with Scanlon and Tautala in risen witness against him? He tried to refuse to come with us (which would have spoiled everything), until Scanlon took a hand in the fray and let his imagination run riot about the law, which, as he was the official representative of it and wore a pewter star on his breast, soon settled To'oto'o's half-hearted objections. If anything else were wanted, it was the arrival at this juncture of Seumanutafa at the head of a dozen retainers, who added the finishing stroke to the little resistance To'oto'o had left. Then we all started off for the Southern Cross Bakery, and, as we walked slowly and naturally, attracted a good deal of attention; and as we told every one we met where we were going to, and why, we grew and grew until, as

I looked down the procession, I couldn't see the end of it. The Chief Justice was sucked in. Likewise the President. Marquardt, the chief of police, joined us; Haggard, the land commissioner; some Mormon missionaries; two lay brothers from the school; a lot of passengers from the mail boat, with handkerchiefs stuck into their sweaty collars; Captain Hufnagel on horseback, with a small army of Guadalcanaar laborers; half the synod of the Wesleyan church in white *lavalavas* and hymn-books; a picnic party that had just returned (not wholly sober) from the Papase'ea; blue-jackets from the *Sperber*; blue-jackets from the *Walleroo*; three survivors of the British bark *Windsor Castle*, burned at sea; a German scientist in Jaeger costume, with blue spectacles and a butterfly net; six whole boatloads of an *aumoenga* party from Manu'a; a lot of political prisoners on parole; two lepers, and Charley Taylor!

It was well we had brought Marquardt with us, for he and his police caught the humor of the thing, and on reaching the bakery formed us up in a great hollow square with one side blank for Silver Tongue, who stood and gazed at us transfixed from the shade of his veranda. Then Seumanutafa, Sasa, Scanlon, Tautala, To'oto'o, and I broke ranks and marched up to him.

"Old man," I said, "if you were to think a year you'd never guess what brought us here to-day!"

"It's O's head again," he said, grinding his teeth and casting a vitriolic glance at To'oto'o, "and if there was any law or order in this God-forsaken land"—he looked daggers at the Chief Justice as he said this—"that fellar would have got short jift for murdering my fader-in-law's aunt's son!"

"He didn't murder him," I said.

Silver Tongue's jaw fell. He looked at us quite overcome. For a minute he couldn't say a word.

"Oh, but he deed!" he said at last.

"It was Tautala that killed him," I said, indicating the young man we had brought from Mulinu'u, "and it turns out he sold your relation's head to To'oto'o for seven dollars and a music box." At this, smiling from ear to ear, Tautala held up the music box to public view, and would have set it going had not something fortunately caught in the works.

"It's a lie!" gasped Silver Tongue. "It's a lie!"

"Scanlon himself was at the battle," I went on, "and he saw the whole thing and was a witness to Tautala getting the seven dollars, and he made To'oto'o pony up four dollars more as the price of his own secrecy."

"Four dollars," ejaculated Scanlon. "That's right, Captain Branscombe. Four dollars!"

"So, if you are angry with anybody," I said,

"you ought to be angry with Tautala. All To'oto'o did was to buy a little cheap notoriety for eleven dollars and a music box."

I never saw a man so stung in all my life as Oppenstedt. The eyes seemed to start from his head, and he glared at To'oto'o as though he could have strangled him. Tautala was quite forgotten in the intensity of his indignation toward Rosalie's uncle. You see, he had been hating To'oto'o ferociously for six months, and couldn't switch off at a moment's notice on an absolute stranger like Tautala. Besides, his hatred for To'oto'o had become a kind of monomania with him, and now here I was telling him what a fool he had made of himself, and proving it with two witnesses and a music box. No wonder that he was staggered.

"Now, old fellow," I said, "we'll call bygones bygones, and maybe you'll let us see a little more of you than we've been doing lately."

"You mean Rosalie, of gourse," he said, snapping the words like a mad dog.

"Yes, Rosalie," I said.

"Gaptain Branscombe," he said, his face convulsed with passion, "that gossumate liar and hybocrite has made such a thing impossible. Far rader would I lay me in the grave—far rader would I have wild horses on me trample—than that I should indermarry with a family and bossibly betaint my innocent kinder with the plood of so shogging and

unprincibled a liar. A man so lost to shame, so beplunged in cowardice and deceit that he couldn't his own heads cut off, but must buy dem of others, and faunt himself a hero while honest worth bassed unnoticed and bushed aside."

"It was honest worth that chopped off the head of your father-in-law's aunt's son!" I said.

"Gaptain," he returned, "there are oggasions when in condrast to a liar—to a golossal liar—to one who has made a peeziness of systematic deception—a murderer is a shentlemans!"

"Oh, you villain baker!" cried Sasa, joining in. "You make *tongafiti*. You never want marry the girl at all. All the time you say something different. Oh, you bad mans, you break girls' hearts—and serve you right somebody cut your head off!"

"Wish they would," I said, out of all patience with the fellow. "First he can't marry Rosalie because her uncle's a murderer. Now he can't marry her because her uncle's a liar. Disprove that, and he'd dig up some fresh objection!"

"I lofe her! I lofe her!" protested Silver Tongue.

"Come, come," I said, "you aren't marrying the girl's adopted uncle."

"A traidor to my family? No, gaptain, dat is what I can never be," said Silver Tongue.

"Traitor—nothing!" I said.

"Oh, the silly baker!" said Sasa.

"He speaks like a delirious person," said Seumanutafa.

"Now about that ham," said the Chief Justice, belligerently coming forward and speaking in rich Swedish accents, "when I send my servant for a ham, Mr. Oppenstedt, I want a good ham—not a great, coarse, fat, stinking lump of dog meat——"

"Let's go," I said to Sasa; "Captain Morse is holding back the *Alameda* for a talk, and I know there's an iced bucket of something in the corner of his cabin."

"Wish the dear old captain would land and punch his head off!" said Sasa vindictively.

"Whose head?" I asked.

"Silver Tongue's," she returned.

Sasa had always plagued me to get up a moonlight sailing party on the *Nukanono*, a little fifteen-ton schooner of mine that plied about the Group. From one reason and another the thing had never come off, though we had talked and arranged it all time and time again. Now that I had remasted her and overhauled her copper and painted her inside and out, the subject had bobbed up again; and as I couldn't make any objection, and as the moon for the first time in seven years had happened to be full at the same moment when the vessel happened to be free, Sasa informed me (in the autocratic manner of lovely woman dealing with an old

sea horse) that the invitations were out, the music engaged, and that my part was to plank down fifty dollars, keep my mouth shut, and do what I was told.

I perceived from the beginning that there was something queer about the trip, for Sasa, usually so communicative, could scarcely be induced to speak of it at all; and then when she did it was with such a parade of mystery and reserve that I felt myself completely baffled. However, like the jossers in the poem, it wasn't for me to reason why, and so I obediently ran about the beach, did what I was bidden, and discreetly asked no questions. I confess, though, that on the day itself my curiosity began to reach the breaking point, when I was told, with gentle impressiveness, that I was to remain in my house till the minute of nine forty-five, pull off quietly to the *Nukanono*, board her by the fore chains, and crouch there in the bow till I was told to get up!

It was a glorious moonlight night as I got into Joe's boat and saw the *Nukanono* across the bay, her loosened sails flapping in the first faint breath of the land breeze, and her booms sparkling from end to end with Chinese lanterns. The water was like black glass, the outer reefs were silent, and the downpouring air from the mountains was fragrant with *moso'oi*, and so warm and scented against the cheek that I doubt not but what you could have

smelled Upolu ninety miles to leeward. As we drew nearer, the sound of girls' laughter, the tuning of musical instruments, the hum and talk and gayety of a large company, floated over to us from the schooner's deck, wonderfully mellowed by the intervening water and (as it seemed to me) softened into a sort of harmony with the night itself.

However, I did not allow these reflections to put me off my duty or make me forgetful of the strict commands I had previously received from Sasa. I came up softly under the bow of the *Nukanono,* dismissed Joe in a whisper, and climbed silently to my appointed station. I had not been there a minute when I felt Sasa's hand on my shoulder and heard her say softly in my ear, "*Malie,*" which in Samoan means good or well done. Then she slipped away, and I heard her with sweet imperiousness ordering about the crew and bidding them slip the moorings. We had hardly got steerage-way when I heard a commotion aft, a choking, angry voice, that sounded through the hubbub like Silver Tongue's, a quick, fierce, violent struggle, and then suddenly the companion hatch went shut with a bang. Even as it did so the fore-hatch followed with a crash, and everybody began to cheer. From below there rose the sound of thumping, smothered Teutonic protests, and a long, poignant, and unmistakably feminine wail.

"All finish, captain," said Sasa, coming up to me cheerfully.

"Would you mind telling me what it's all about?" I asked.

"Just a little *tongafiti* to bring loving hearts together," said Sasa. "They threw Silver Tongue down the after hatchway, while me and the girls we pushed Rosalie down the forehold. There they are, all alone in the dark, with five hours to make it up!"

I could not help laughing at Sasa's plan, especially when under my feet I began to hear more frenzied thumping and more feminine wails. Then I recollected there wasn't five feet of headroom below, and that the place, even with the hatches off, was hot enough to boil water in.

"They'll die down there, Sasa," I said.

"No fear," said Sasa. "Rosalie is half Samoa, and as for Silver Tongue—if he get roast like his own bread nobody care a banana."

"But, Sasa—" I protested.

"Now you go flirt with some my girls," she said, "and don't bother your old head about nothings!"

"But, my dear girl—" I protested.

"They'll do very nicely, thank you," said Sasa, interrupting me, "and if they're hungry, isn't there ham sandwich? And if they're thirsty, isn't there claret punch in a milk can? And as for lights—true lovers don't want no lights!"

"Well, Sasa," I said, "I dare say it's a bright idea, and that you deserve the greatest credit for arranging it all; but for the Lord's sake, let me off the ship before you remove the hatches."

"Oh, no," said Sasa, "everybody stay and see the fun!"

Fun, indeed, I thought, as I heard a terrific pounding below, and an uproar that would have been creditable to a sinking liner. The deck shook with sledge-hammer blows, and a lot of glasses tumbled off one of our improvised tables. Then we heard what was obviously a revengeful wrecking of the whole ship's interior—the smashing of crockery and lamps, a tramping and a kicking and a throwing down of everything that was loose or could be wrenched off, together with a hollow, reverberatory boom of German profan— No, I won't be unjust, and one really couldn't hear well. Sasa stamped on the deck with her little foot and cried out: "Be quiet, you silly baker!" But the silly baker only roused himself to a renewed ferocity, and, instead of calming down, went off again like twenty-five bunches of firecrackers under a barrel —and large firecrackers, too.

Off and on he must have kept this up for more than an hour; then at length he subsided, finding, I suppose, that one German baker, however infuriated, was unable to make an impression on a three-inch deck. By the end of the second hour

we had forgotten all about him, for heeling over in the pleasant breeze, and what with singing and telling stories and flirting in the moonlight we were all too happy and too busy to take thought of the stifling lovers below our feet. Occasionally I had a haunting sense of a day of reckoning, but I held my peace and forebore to disquiet my pretty hostess, who was the life and soul of the whole party aboard, and whose silvery laughter chimed in so sweetly with the tropic night and the rippling gurgle of water along our keel.

It was past three o'clock when we picked up the Mission light and ran back to our moorings off the Firm. Then the question arose as to who would uncage our love-birds and bear the first brunt of Silver Tongue's explosion. I confess I was very little eager for the job, and felt a peculiar sinking in the region of my watch pocket as we unlocked the after-hatch and rolled it softly back, Sasa, with a bull's-eye lantern penetrating the gloom with a dazzling circle of light. It fell on the figures of Rosalie and Silver Tongue seated on a settee and locked in each other's arms. Rosalie was asleep, with her graceful head lying on Silver Tongue's breast and her long lashes still wet with tears. The baker, his face crimson with heat and streaked with rivulets of perspiration, looked up at us grimly through a sort of mist. I waited for him to spring to his feet and throw himself

like a lion on my shrinking form; but, instead of doing so, he pressed his arms closer round Rosalie and smiled—yes, by Jove, smiled—and, if you'll take the word of a retired master mariner, winked, with a peculiar, tender and calfish expression that in anybody else would have been called skittish.

"How goes it, old man?" I said.

"Gaptain," he returned in the tone of a clarionet tootling a love passage in grand opera, "me and Rosalie invites you all to the Bublic Hall Thursday night to dance at our wedding!"

PROFESSOR NO NO

It was years ago that he came to Uvea (said little Nofo, as we sat side by side on a derelict spar and watched the sun go down into the lagoon)—years and years and years ago, when I was an unthinking child and knew naught of men nor their crooked hearts. He was a chief, of wild and strange appearance, with a black beard half covering his piglike face; a thin, bent, elderly chief, with hairy hands, and a head on which there was nothing at all, and teeth so loose in his mouth that at night he laid them in a cup beside him. He was landed from a ship that forthwith sailed and was never seen again—he and three tents, and a boat and innumerable boxes, all numbered from one to a thousand, and a nigger named Billy Hindoo to care for him and cook.

The Government gave him a piece of land next the lagoon, where he pitched his tents and lived; and they put a taboo round the land so that none might cross, and also a notice on a board, saying, "Be careful of the white man." Here he unpacked his things, and arranged a place for Billy Hindoo, and another place, open at the sides, where at a

table he was daily served with sardines and bottled beer. He was named Professor, and his occupation, unlike that of all other white men, was to look at dead fish through bits of glass. He was a man of no kindness nor accomplishments, meanly solitary, and, in spite of two pairs of spectacles worn the one on the other, he was almost blind besides. Were you to come near him, he would scream out, "No, no!" Were you even to touch his bits of glass, or finger his sticky shadow pictures in the pool, he would run at you, crying, "No, no!" Were you to approach him as he bathed in the lagoon, marveling at his unsightliness, he would beat the water like one delirious, and scream again, "No, no!" So, in time, his name became changed from Professor into No No, or, as many called him in one word, Professor No No; and we all grew to hate him, as did also Billy Hindoo, who was generous and loving, and gave away unstintedly sardines and biscuit to those he favored.

But Professor No No, unexpectedly returning in his boat with a new dead fish no bigger than that (a fish, too, of so little worth that one couldn't eat it without feeling ill for the succeeding week), discovered Billy Hindoo dividing a tin of biscuit among the girls with whom he had made friends. The rage of Professor No No was without limit, and he ran at Billy Hindoo and choked him with

his hairy hands, and beat him over the body with a stick, and drove him away with execrations. Then he sat down at the table and drank bottled beer, and held up the fish to his blind eyes, and at intervals shouted out, "No, no; No, no," as we all crowded about the taboo line, watching and wondering.

The next day Billy Hindoo came back, but Professor No No repelled him with a stick, having counted the beer and the sardines and the biscuit, and found many missing. Then Billy Hindoo sought a place in the house of Tamua, and being a man of subtle mind, though without paper on which to write, carved the date of his rejection on a tree, together with the names of witnesses who had seen him struck. He would fain have brought suit against his master before the ancients, but they were afraid of men-of-war, and thought it ill to interfere. But the anger of Billy Hindoo surpassed that of a woman whose man has cast her off; and, baffled in one direction, he redoubled his efforts in another, telling tales about Professor No No that made the strongest shudder to hear them; how, indeed, he was Antichrist, and that his coming to Uvea had been foretold in Revelations. Whether this was true or false, it was evident that Professor No No believed not in God; for it was seen he went never to church, and remembered (when strangers asked him if he were a mission-

ary) that he would grow beside himself and roar, "No, no!" snorting like a suffocating person.

Now there lived in the village a chief named Malamalama, a young man who owned a fine house and much land, and was withal so handsome and gay that there was scarce a woman but whose eyes shone at the sight of him. And Malamalama's wife was named Salesa, and the strange thing about Salesa was that she was white. Her father had been a *papalangi*, and her mother (who came from another island to the southward) a half-white; and Salesa, the child of the two, was fairer than either, and a girl, besides, of wonderful beauty. It was this that found her favor in Malamalama's sight, for she was without family, and what Kanaka blood she possessed was that of slaves; but the chief must needs have his way, being a man of imperious temper and willful under advice; and so the little out-islander was married to him and elevated to the rank of chieftainess.

Then her arrogance and pride, previously concealed by the humbleness of her station, broke out with the fierceness of consuming flames. Were you to pass her on the road and say, "*Talofa, Salesa,*" she often deigned not to return your greeting; and when people came to her house she did not like, she would say to them, "Go away," like that, so that everyone was insulted and retired with darkened faces. Of course, she was not utterly

without friends, women of contemptible spirit who fawned on her like dogs, saying, "Lo, is she not beautiful?" But they were only a handful, and by degrees grew less and less, for she was as mean with her property as Professor No No, and made the most trifling returns for pigs or costly presents. So in time she was left alone in her fine house, and though she had a sewing machine and a musical box, and goldfish in a glass jar, and an umbrella with a glittering handle, she spent her days in yawning, and her nights in telling Malamalama what a fool she had been to marry him.

After the manner of men, Malamalama's love increased in the proportion of her disdain, and there was nothing he would not do to try and please her. He took her on board every succeeding ship, and remained for hours in the trade room while she spent the price of many tons of copra and pearl shell in filling a chest with purchases, saying, in her presumptuous way, "Give me twenty fathoms of this; give me forty fathoms of the other. This silk is good, lo! I will take a bolt." And Malamalama, who perhaps wanted an anchor for his boat, or a little, tiny, trifling pea-soupo of paint, had perforce to do without either, and paddle ashore again, poorer, indeed, than many of his serfs and dependents.

On these occasions also Salesa showed a lawless deportment among the whites that put her good

name in jeopardy and caused many to wonder and gossip. She would sit at the cabin table and drink beer and eat sardines, saying saucily, "Me white mans, too," as she joked and laughed with the captains and supercargoes. Or, if some one put his head down the hatchway, she would call out, "Oh, the Kanaka dog! Go 'way, you peeping Kanaka dog!" Whereat the whites would slap her on the back, and it was said they even placed her on their knees and kissed her. Be that true or false, Malamalama grew to hate the sight of a ship; and sometimes, when he and Salesa went on board together, he showed her a sharp knife, and said, "Be careful, you wicked white woman, or I shall kill you."

She was as changeable as a little child, and had humors, too, of tenderness and contrition, when she would put her arms round her husband's neck and be-darling him, saying, "I love you! I love you!" and bemoan her contrariness and the fact that she was white. For though she was born and bred with us, she felt she was not of our race; and sometimes she would say to Malamalama when he reproached her, "Sell me to one of the captains for a whaleboat and let me go." But Malamalama only loved her the more, and his handsome face grew sullen and angry as he threatened again to kill her if she misbehaved.

Now when Professor No No came to live with us on the lagoon, Salesa was beside herself with

curiosity, and heaped presents on Billy Hindoo in order to learn about his master. But Billy Hindoo knew nothing but his own stutter, and though he took the presents and came constantly to Salesa's house, very little in the way of information was accomplished. At last, greatly daring, Salesa arrayed herself in her finest clothes, and with servants carrying gifts of pigs and chickens, went down to the lagoon to pay a visit to the stranger. She found Professor No No sitting at his table, looking at dead fish through bits of glass, and he never turned round as the party halted at the taboo line and coughed deprecatorily in order to attract his attention. Then Salesa, who feared neither devil nor man, took the baskets in her arms and stepped across the taboo, saying in a voice of sweetness, "Professor No No! Professor No No!"

He sprang from the table and rushed at her, waving his arms, and screaming as was his wont, "No, no! No, no!" while she, overcome with terror, dropped the gifts and fled like a sea mew on the wings of the wind. That night all Uvea joked about her discomfiture, while she sat in her house and cried, and Billy Hindoo was invited everywhere to tell the story in the antics that served him in the place of a tongue. But once Salesa had set her heart on a thing she never faltered nor turned aside; and though she waited and waited, it was not as one conquered or resigned.

When the quarrel came between Billy Hindoo and his master, she saw the means, in Professor No No's desolation and abandonment, of obtaining the satisfaction of her purpose. For the white man, thus left to himself, grew increasingly dirty and uncared for; and his camp, once so clean under the care of Billy Hindoo, became as a pigsty of empty cans and bottles. Nothing therein was washed, and the savor of Professor No No and his camp blew noisomely across the taboo line as one walked to leeward.

One day, after spying out that he had already sailed out for more fish to look at through bits of glass, Salesa crept into the settlement and began to make it clean again. She carried away all the tins and bottles; she swept the disordered grass; she entered the professor's tent, filling his water-bottles, making his bed and decorating it with flowers and *laumaile*. Then, as she had so often watched Billy Hindoo from a distance, she spread the table with a clean cloth, and on it she placed a bottle of beer and a tin of sardines under a wire netting and three ship's biscuits in a row. Then she went back and hid in the undergrowth, waiting and waiting, like a warrior in an ambush.

But Professor No No made no sign as he landed from his boat, nor did he seem to perceive that anything unusual had taken place in the time he had been gone. He drank the bottle of beer and

ate the sardines and biscuit, never troubling himself whence they had come; and while Salesa waited and waited with a suffocating heart, he looked at dead fish through bits of glass. But day by day she returned to his camp with the assiduity of a mother to her nursing child; and by degrees growing bolder with custom, she no longer watched until Professor No No had departed, but moved here and there about his land, secure by reason of his blindness and preoccupation. Like a wild animal to whom one approaches with gentleness and precaution, thus it was with Professor No No in the hands of Salesa. First he saw her only at a distance as she cleaned and swept; then a little closer as she spread his table and laid out his bottle of beer and the sardines and biscuit; then it came about that she even touched him with impunity, and sat beside him in a chair as he continued to look at dead fish through bits of glass. At last she dared to speak, telling him softly the names of the dead fish, which he wrote down in a little book, and informing him also that her name was Salesa, and that she loved him.

And she, so defiant and proud, became as another person; so that she was kind not only to Professor No No, but to others whom she had previously treated with contumely. She carried the white man's packages when he went abroad, his photograph box and all manner of apparatus and

tools, and the bottle of beer and the sardines for his well-being, never heeding the sun nor the fiery sand. She sat with him daily in his boat, baiting his hooks and catching fish likewise, and grew wise also in looking at them through bits of glass, so that he no longer ran at her and cried, "No, no!" when she touched his things. On the contrary, her wisdom increased in such matters, becoming in time even as his own, so that she also took photographs, and hammered off pieces of coral from the reef, and grew excited over little, common, worthless fish that stung you if you touched them.

It is not to be supposed that Malamalama watched with any equanimity this increasing friendship between Professor No No and his wife, or that the constant tale of scandal and evil-doing fell on heedless ears. He beat Salesa repeatedly with a stick, and she bit him in return all over his beautiful body; and their fine house, once the envy of all Uvea, reechoed distressfully with screams and blows. But the madness of a woman for a man is not thus to be set aside, and the more Malamalama beat her with a stick, the more ardent grew her love for Professor No No; and when he talked with her and argued, she would answer unabashed that whites were whites and Kanakas were Kanakas, and that it was ill to mix the oil and water of the races.

"But he is overgrown with hair like a dog,"

said Malamalama, "except on his head, which glistens like a sting ray in the sun, and he is altogether hideous and frightening. It is not reasonable that anyone should prefer him to me."

"But there is that in his head which makes him beautiful," said Salesa.

"Lo! I have things in my head also," said Malamalama, "and I pass my life, besides, like a man, diving for shell, and cutting copra on my property, and attending to the affairs of the church where I am deacon, and finding everywhere a better employment than that of looking at dead fish through bits of glass."

"Malamalama," said Salesa, "divorce me and let me go, and take thy choice of all the maids of Uvea in my stead. Professor No No loves me not, but I am his bondslave in love, and care for no other man but him."

Now this was very good advice, and the chief would have done well to follow it. But there is in men a pride about their women that blinds their eyes to sense, and Malamalama, instead of heeding, grew, on the contrary, morose and willful. He listened more greedily than ever to Billy Hindoo, and to the tales the nigger brought him constantly of Salesa's misdoing; for Billy Hindoo was crazed with anger against his master, and against the woman who had so successfully supplanted him, and was eager to revenge himself on both. And

one day he brought not only a new tale, but a bottle of gin he had managed to pilfer from the camp of Professor No No.

Malamalama began to drink the gin, and the more he drank the more he began to feel the aching of his spirit. He stopped the passers-by and told them of his wrongs; he rolled over in the road, so that he was all dirty, calling out curses on his wife and Professor No No. He cried and cried, and staggered about and shouted, and rushed hither and thither, exclaiming, "I will kill them! I will kill them!" And all the while he drank of the gin with an increasing fury, so that he went at last and got his rifle and four boxes of cartridges and walked unsteadily toward the lagoon, weeping and laughing and beating the air with his loaded gun. And I, then only a little child, followed him at a distance, wondering and mocking with the others.

Now on this occasion it happened that Salesa was away in the boat, and Professor No No, all alone, was sitting at his table and looking at dead fish through bits of glass. Malamalama stopped at the taboo line, not daring to cross it, and withheld, besides, by the notice on the tree; and he was so tipsy with the gin that he could barely shout, nor hold the gun up to his shoulder. But he fired, as straight as he could, in the direction of Professor No No, and shattered a glass barrel of dead fish at his elbow. Professor No No leaped in the

air, so that at first we thought, erroneously, that he had been hurt; and he ran this way and that, dodging the bullets from Malamalama's gun. He seemed to believe that the taboo gave him protection, for, instead of bolting into the undergrowth, he raced around and around in a circle, and then inside this tent and that, so that it was laughable to watch him popping in and out like a terrified rat. And Malamalama, so overcome with gin that he could barely see, fired and fired and fired from the four boxes of his cartridges. Then, when all was finished, he rose and went home, while the children crowded the line and shouted, "Professor No No, art thou dead?"

That night there was a meeting of the ancients in the speak-house, and all the culprits were there under guard to receive a judgment. Malamalama was fined one dollar for being drunk and fifteen dollars for firing unwarrantably at Professor No No; and Professor No No was fined fifteen dollars for having won Salesa from her husband; and Billy Hindoo was fined fifteen dollars for having given the gin to Malamalama and for the mischief he had caused with his lying tongue; and Salesa was surrendered to the matrons of the village to receive a lashing for her misconduct. Then Tanielu, the pastor, prayed that God's wrath might be averted from so wicked a village, and made a beautiful parable about the Garden of Eden and the serpent.

One might have thought that this would have healed the matter, and that a punishment so nearly equal would have been submitted to with humility and grace. But, on the contrary, the quarrel went from bad to worse, so that Tanielu, the pastor, would say sorrowfully from the pulpit that Uvea was like another hell, but with four devils instead of one. Malamalama, once a pillar of the church, was degraded from the rank of deacon and expelled, becoming speedily dissolute and abandoned, opening his house for forbidden dances, and taking new wives in shameless succession; and Salesa, her pretty body red with stripes, found no consolation whatever in her white darling, who ran at her repellingly, shouting "No, no!" like a lion; and Billy Hindoo, of whom everyone had tired on account of his light fingers and calumniating tongue, grew increasingly burdensome to his adopted family, and spent most of his time in stoning Professor No No from a safe distance and demanding his wages even to that day, together with a passage at once to the white country.

During this season no ship at all came to Uvea, though Professor No No watched unceasingly for one, and likewise Billy Hindoo, and likewise Malamalama, the chief; and Tanielu prayed and prayed and prayed without end, "Lord, send Thou speedily a vessel and rid us of these intruders." The white man, for all his wisdom, was cowardly be-

yond belief, and so fearful of Malamalama that the sight of Salesa made him tremble forthwith with apprehension. And she, repelled by her husband and dependent on the bounty of those that despised her, became as one lost to all propriety, and would run at Professor No No and clasp him in her arms and cherish him, he fighting and resisting with all his might, crying "No, no!" in a terrible voice. Were he to unmoor his boat, lo! she was there swimming in its wake and demanding to be taken in, lest she drown; were he to sit down and quietly look at dead fish through bits of glass, lo! there also was she beside him in a chair; were he to slumber in a shady place during the afternoon, he would awake with his head in her lap or with her kisses against his lips.

So weak, indeed, was his heart, that he was not even grateful for her assistance against Billy Hindoo, who came constantly, this day and that, with unfailing regularity, to throw stones at his former master and cry threateningly, "Hi, yi! give me wages even to this day, and return me to the white country according to thy covenant." Then it was that Salesa would throw stones back again, or would hide in the bushes and try to strike the nigger with a knife, saying in mockery as she sprang at him, "Hi, yi! take that!" And once she came to him so close that she slashed him across the breast, and he hastened bleeding before the ancients and vocif-

erously complained. Then she was whipped again by the matrons, and Billy Hindoo was fined for throwing stones, and Professor No No was fined yet a second time for stealing away Malamalama's wife, and Malamalama was fined for leading a life of infamy and riot, and Tanielu said again from the pulpit, "Hasten, Lord, or Thy servants perish!"

Thus the days passed in unending strife and bitterness, terrible now to be recalled. When Malamalama took a new wife, the former wife's family would lie in wait and try to kill him; and other husbands, before exemplary and well conducted, growing restive to see him so successful in his unbridled wickedness, took in their turn the pick of the village maids, propagating hatred and disorder the like of which had never before been known in Uvea. Then the drought came, and the young nuts shriveled on the trees, and the sky, as far as one's eye could reach, remained like shining copper, without a breath. It was plainly seen that God, in anger, was laying His hand heavily on Uvea; and lo! He spoke through the pastor Tanielu, saying, "Repent, repent, or else ye perish!"

There was a great meeting of the ancients in the speak-house; and one ancient spoke for Malamalama, and another ancient spoke for Salesa, and another ancient spoke for Professor No No, and still another ancient spoke for Billy Hindoo; and the

whole matter was inquired into from the first day and debated in turn by all the ancients, and a final judgment at length arrived at. Malamalama was confirmed in his latest marriage, swearing with his hand on the Holy Book that in future he would cease his evil and cling to her, giving a fine mat by way of reparation to each of her predecessors; and Salesa was declared divorced from Malamalama, and she and Professor No No were ordered to marry themselves forthwith before the pastor Tanielu; and Billy Hindoo was commanded to go back to his master and remain within the taboo line under pain of death, and an ancient was appointed to visit him daily to lash him if he misbehaved even in the smallest matter; and then the whole meeting prayed first for rain, and then that God might send a ship.

When the new arrangement was with difficulty explained to the white man, he was as one crazed, waving his arms and screaming out "No, no!" without cessation; and he persisted thus, to the scandal of everyone, until Tanielu, losing patience, struck him like that on the head and married him immediately to Salesa, whose face shone with contentment and happiness. In this manner Professor No No and Salesa and Billy Hindoo were escorted homeward to their camp; and then everyone breathed with relief and congratulated one another on so peaceful and satisfactory a settlement.

But the ancients were still in their places when Salesa returned, saying that Professor No No had repulsed her; and behind her was Billy Hindoo, equally repulsed, who said his master refused to pay him his wages to that day or to send him back at once to the white country according to the covenant; and behind them both was Professor No No with his head tied in a towel, where the pastor had hurt him, cursing and reviling like a maniac.

Then the ancients held another meeting; and lo! it was a secret meeting; and Tanielu spoke for God, and everyone made speeches in turn; and it was recalled, with eloquent outbursts, how peaceful and happy Uvea had been in the days preceding Professor No No's arrival. There were some who wanted to have him killed as a punishment; and others who voted against Salesa, saying it was she who was at fault; and still others who burned with resentment against Billy Hindoo, declaring that he was the worst of all. Thus, like a battle rolling to and fro, Salesa, Professor No No, and Billy Hindoo were each in turn imperiled; and when day broke, their fate, though they knew it not, had been finally settled by the ancients.

Professor No No's boat was carried by twenty men from the lagoon shore, where it lay, over to the ocean beach; and with it was borne sardines and biscuit and beer from the white man's store; and the glass barrels were emptied, many of them,

of their dead fish, being washed and refilled with fresh water from the spring, and their glass tops fastened tightly with cocoanut sinnet. Then, when everything had been made ready, Billy Hindoo was forced to seat himself in the bow of the boat; and in the stern were put Salesa and Professor No No, side by side, the center being filled with the cargo of provisions and water.

And Salesa laughed and joked with the men, begging them to take out Billy Hindoo, or to give him a boat of his own; and saying wildly, when denied, that she was going where none might whip her now, to find a beautiful island whereon to live with her husband. But the white man was convulsed with fear, and said nothing in the making ready of the boat, not even "No, no" when Salesa put her arms round him and kissed him again and again on the lips; and Billy Hindoo shook like a wet dog in the bow, whimpering, "Hi, yi! me British subject! me no likey!" babbling deliriously besides of his wages even to that day, and of the unfulfilled covenant with its passage to the white country in a ship.

Then the sail was hoisted and the sheet put into Salesa's hand; and in this wise the boat was shoved into deep water, and her bow headed straight to seaward. Then Tanielu fell on his knees and prayed that Uvea might be delivered forever and ever of such an infliction; and the young men

formed a line with their rifles, ready to shoot if the voyagers showed the least sign of coming back; and across the waves one could see Salesa supporting Professor No No as the boat lay over in the wind, and her mocking laughter was borne back to us. And we waited and waited and waited as it became a diminishing speck against the sky; and waited and waited and waited until it disappeared. Then, lo! there were explosions of thunder and lightning, and the rain descended in torrents, and the little children all threw off their clothes and ran about rejoicing in the wet, while the elders looked at one another, and said, "Lo, Uvea is delivered!"

CAPTAIN ELIJAH COE

PUNA PUNOU lies in 14th South exactly, though the writer keeps back the longitood for reasons that will soon be understood by the gentle reader —if the gentle reader is patient and won't skip. Not that there is any buried treasure there, or any foolishness of that kind; it's girls mostly, and pearl shell and cocoanuts, that Puna Punou produces, and you don't need no chart with red crosses from my dying hands to find any of them. But Mrs. Tweedie is still alive, and likewise Elijah Coe, and I'd be acting like the son of a sea cook if I did a hand's turn to hurt either. Of course it's an old story now, going back to the days before the bottom had dropped out of copra, and there was still money to be made in beach-la-mar and fungus. Oh, my, yes! a long time ago, before steam ever got into the Group, before law and order and compulsory vaccination, and an hour and a half of Deputy Commissioner every nine months.

It was always a mighty fine island to look at, rising sheer from the sea to basaltic cliffs, and high needlelike pinnacles, and forested solid from the water's edge to almost the top; and off the main

settlement of Fale a Lupo there was good holding ground in six fathoms. A tidy little island, indeed, and I'd never raise it of a dawn, and all its palms and beaches and little basket-work houses peeping out of the deep shade, but I'd feel glad all over again that it was there, and breathe in the fragrant smell of it like a child happy at getting home from school. I guess the people there helped a lot, too, for they were the handsomest in the Pacific, and it was a regular port of call for the whalers to take in green stuff, girls, fresh water, and firewood.

In the old days it was the Rev. John Geer who ran the missionary mill, and taught the heathen to put their pennies in the plate and wear pants—not that they ever did the last to any alarming extent, except in the annual reports that were sent back to be printed East; while Mrs. Geer she homeopathed the island and inculcurated the principles of female virtoo in the young. But after twenty-one years of it the Geers returned home to Connecticut, and the Tweedies were landed from the *Olive Branch* barkentine, to take their places in that section of the world's vineyard.

Tweedie was a hay-colored little man, narrer chested and tallowy, but if ever there was a copper-riveted Christian from Christianville I guess he was *it*! Meek! Why he was happy to get slapped, he was that pleased to turn the other cheek; and if you took away his cloak, he was the kind of fellar

who wanted you to take his panjammers extra. Had no spirit at all, and the Kanakas walked over him scandalous. But it was his wife I wanted to tell about, Alethea Tweedie; for if ever there was an angel from heaven, with the prettiest blue eyes, and hair like streaming gold, and the cherriest lips you ever saw out of a chromo, and teeth whiter than—than—(it don't sound right to say a shark's) it was that peerless creature.

How Tweedie could have captured such a bang-up stunner was hard to understand then, and harder afterwards. A king on his throne might have been glad to win Alethea Tweedie for his queen, and captains and supercargoes would have knifed each other for a single smile, if she had been the kind to lead them on—which, Lord bless me! was the last thought she had in her curly head. I suppose she came from one of them little places back East where it's all women for miles, and they rate anything a man that can raise a whisker! Thrown away, that's what the beach called it, and misdoubted whether Tweedie wasn't a girl, too, only with drill trousers instead of panties.

In all them brown faces and tanned leathery white ones you can imagine what a pink rosebud she seemed to be; and it wasn't like that she stopped at that, for she could sing like a nightingale and talk to beat the band; and her laugh itself was like music, sounding long afterwards in

your ears at sea. Hit? Jimini Christmas, I should say I was hit! Am still, for that matter, with just the memory of her, though twenty years have come and gone, and I loved the ground her little feet walked on. Not that there was anything out of the way in that. We all did, down to Portuguese Joe, and Billy Jones's cousin; and as for Elijah Coe, he simply give one yelp and keeled over!

Coe was the captain and owner of the *Peep o' Day* topsail schooner, and had been trading about the Group for a matter of eight years. In all my seafaring days I never saw his match for daredeviltry or courage, though a quieter man to look at there never was. He was about forty years old, tall and lean, with a nose on him like a hawk; and to see him stripped you'd think he was a boy, he was that straight and well set up. A fine man to look at, very quick on his pins, and kind of proud and silent in company like he was mostly thinking of something else. I reckon perhaps he likely was, for he was splendidly educated, with rows on rows of books in his cabin, and a cyclopediar six feet long. The mate said he knew everything in it up to R, not to speak of working lunars in a saucer of quicksilver, and reckonizing squid by its Latin name.

No one knew how he had got the money to buy his ship, which was a re-markable fine vessel and

fitted up regardless. Some said there was once a name on the brass bell aft, which had been filed down careful and worked over with emery paper afterwards; but I never could see no sign of it myself, though I never went aboard but I took a good look; and others who said it was Labor. He certainly knew a lot about the Westward, and I heard him, one day, giving Captain Rick the directions to enter Port McGuire by. But you know what a place the beach is for talk, and, anyway, heaps of good men and highly respected have been Blackbirders in their time, and I never could see no harm in the trade myself. But the gossip was that he had flown the Peruvian flag and emptied whole islands, though I never believed a word of it myself. It was re-markable, too, how he kep his people, and how they looked up to him, which wouldn't have been the case if he had been like they represented. There was John Rau, the mate, a bullet-headed Belgian, who used to walk just like *he* did and copy all his little ways slavish, reading the cyclopediar, too, and stopping at R from discipline. And Lum, the China cook, a freak of a fellar, with coal-black hair all round his head like a girl's, and who'd out-Coe Coe till you'd split. The rest of the crew was just the usual thing—Rotumah boys, an Highwayman or two, and some Nieues—sometimes the same, sometimes different—like on any island vessel.

It was some time before Captain Coe got on to the Tweedies, or Alethea, as I suppose I ought to say, for nobody ever took no particular stock in the *he*-Tweedie. He ran acrost her first when he was ashore doctoring some of his native friends, and handing out pain-killer and salts unstinted. They walked home together to the Mission house, standing a long time at the door, and he talking with his hat off. He must have been well brought up and used to meeting ladies, for anybody could tell by her face that she was pleased. She didn't seem the least bit eager to let him go, and once she took his Tahiti hat and held it in both her hands like she would prevent him. And he didn't seem to want to go neither, though he wrastled for his hat, very perlite and gay, and I could see the glisten of her white teeth through the spyglass.

The next day he called in state, with the skull of a shark in a silk handkerchief, and a man carrying a crate of onions. Oh, it may sound common to you, but it's like sending flowers to your lady-love in Puna Punou, and I've seen a year pass without the sight of one! I guess he walked in on velvet, and it is certain he stayed nigh two hours, for I timed him myself from the deck of the *Ransom*—the beach being a great place to take notice, as I have said already—and what was our feelings when next Sunday the captain marched into church —yes, sir—in crisp new panjammers and a polka-

dot neckerchief; and I'm blest if John Rau wasn't there, too, likewise polka-dotted; and that there Chinaman tagging along behind, rigged the same, only with earrings extra, and taking a back seat out of respeck! Afterwards they all went up to the Mission house in a body, Tweedie jumping in with an address, and everybody singing except the Chinaman, who was made to stop!

You mustn't think for a minute that we traders knew the missionary or that he knew us, or that the beach took any part in this except at a distance. There's no love lost between missionaries and traders. That's what made it so strange to see Captain Coe going the way he did, and taking up with all that nigger-loving and "Johnny, how's your soul?" We could only see one reason, and that was Alethea Tweedie; and the betting was about even whether he'd pull it off or not. But if we didn't *talk* to the Tweedies, I guess there was mighty little that went on there we didn't know of —whether it was turtle steak for breakfast, or the tiff they had about her wearing too gauzy a dress at the party Coe gave aboard the *Peep o' Day*.

He did it up in style, with bunting and Chinese lanterns and the king, and afterwards there was fireworks. Oh, my, yes! a regular blow-out, with the crew in new jumpers and two boatloads of flowers and *moso'oi*! We all asked one another where it was going to end, what with the picnic

next day, and him always at the Mission house. But we might have saved our breath, as far as any scandal was concerned, for, instead of up stick and away, with the lady locked in his cabin, like some of the beach had fondly hoped, what did Coe do but turn missionary himself! Got religion, by God! till you couldn't have known him for the same master mariner; while John Rau and Lum, not to be behindhand neither, cavorted into the holy swim with a whoop and a bang! The captain went off terrific—like everything he did—making Billy Jones's cousin marry his wife, and Peter Extrum marry *his*; and there was more half-caste baptizing and squealing and certificating than I remember since the tidal wave of Eighty-one!

Coe put it all down to conviction and a change of heart, but anybody could see it was Alethea Tweedie who was *his* religion. When he prayed, which he used to do tremendous, it was all the time to Mrs. Tweedie; and when he said the kingdom of heaven, you knew mighty well that to him it was the coral Mission house on the hill. He put her on a pedestal a mile high, and kep her at the top by worshiping so hard at the bottom. I guess she couldn't have got off without stepping all over him, and was just forced to be a saint whether she wanted to or no. Not but what she was as good as gold, and a pattern for any young white woman to go by, but her eyes always kind of melted

when she looked at Coe; which was no wonder, as he stood six feet high and straight as a dart, and every girl in the island was wild about him; and she had an imperious little way of treating him like he was a favorite dog who she was proud to show off being master of. She sent him her canary, which was all she had in the world except her clothes, and wrote a little piece how it would sing to him at sea and soothe his rugged bosom.

This wasn't all he got neither, for she was a great one with her needle, and did texts better nor a Sailors' Home. Coe's cabin was more like a little Bethel than the inside of a trading ship, for there was six of them, and a red worsted dog extra, playing with a blue worsted ball, and "Jesus, Lover of my Soul" and "Where is my Wandering Boy To-night?" The biggest joke of all was in the trade room, where there was "Honesty is the Best Policy," and "God Sees You"; and the boys guyed Coe about it unmerciful till he laid out Tom Dawlish with a fancy lamp, and said a gentleman ought to know where to stop. He was an awful thin-skinned kind of Christian when it came to any remarks being passed on Mrs. Tweedie, and Tom has a scar there to this day, though Coe made it up to him afterwards with a melodian worth nine dollars.

But Coe wasn't the only dog around the Mission house. Mrs. Tweedie started up another, a scamp

of a chief named Afiola. In every community there's some fellar who's at the root of all the mischief that happens, so that if anybody gets speared of a dark night, or a girl is missing from home, you know just where to look for who done it. In Puna Punou you looked for Afiola, and the chances were you'd find him drunk on orange beer and laying for trouble with a gun. Oh, yes, indeed, there was two to his credit, to my certain knowledge, murders both, and I'll bet a ton of shell to an old hat besides that he had a hand in taking off the Chinaman at Oa Bay. A regular bad lot, and, like every big scalawag, every little scalawag had to tail along with him, too, for company and mutual protection; so his houses was the kind of Bowery of Puna Punou, with the whalers going to him to buy girls, and all that.

There were higher chiefs than Afiola in the settlement—five or six of them, at least, not to speak of the king—but none of them seemed able to do a thing to stop him. They were all a slack lot at any time, and thought excommunicating him enough, and taking away his communion ticket. I guess he had been out of the church for a matter of six years, and, as I said before, he was the scandal of the place and a terror. They were all dead scared of him, that was the truth, and, though his following was small, they were ugly customers and well armed, and could line up a dozen rifles in the

twinkling of an eye. We often talked it over among ourselves how to break the gang up, but, as he always left the whites alone, and was even a favorite with the worst, it ended like it begun—in smoke.

This Afiola wasn't of any particular age, because the natives don't know when they are born, and have nothing to go by like dates and sich. I suppose Afiola was somewheres around thirty, for he had two children, about eight or nine each, a girl and a boy, who lived with him in his house, together with Talavao, his old mother, Sosofina, his aunt, Oloa, his uncle, his brother Filipo, and a raft of other blood relations whose names I disremember. Like all the chiefs of Puna Punou, Afiola was a tall, fine-looking man, very vigorous, lordly, and pleasant spoken, and if it weren't for his pock-marked face and the wickedest eyes I ever saw in a man's head, you would have said he was a perfect gentleman, and handsome, as Kanakas go. I had never had a bit of trouble with him myself, and whenever I put business in his way he had always come down prompt with pigs and mats and *masoa*.

It was a long time before he took any notice of the Tweedies, not going to church, and always busy raising a little hell somewheres. But when it came, it came with a bang and no mistake, and, my stars, if he didn't pull in the slack! He made up to the Mission house like he was their long-lost

brother; threw fits of reformation till they took him back into church membership again; and not a blessed day passed but it was pigs or chickens or sugar cane or pineapples at the Mission-house door, and please, might their servant Afiola approach their Excellencies! It was as good as a play to see the rascal winding them around his little finger and doing injured innocent on their front stoop. To hear him gas, you'd think there was a conspiracy to run him out of Fale a Lupo; and even when he owned up to some of his misdeeds, it was like a compliment to the Tweedies for having yanked in such a black sheep. I read somewheres that the road to success is to trade on people's weaknesses, and the soft spot with the Tweedies was their desire to make a thundering success and leave all their predecessors in the soup. After having captured the chief white sinner, Elijah Coe, they were now hauling in the boss brown one, Afiola, and I guess they felt as pleased as a fellar who's bought a ton of shell for a condemned army musket.

My, but they were good to that man, forever inviting him to breakfast or that, and sending for him first thing if they were in a fix! It was all Afiola this, and Afiola that; and he got texts, too, from Mrs. Tweedie, and red worsted dogs, and "God Bless Our Home." By the time they had engineered him into shoes and pants, no one daring

to laugh for fear he'd shoot them, they promoted him deacon, and put him on the committee for re-roofing the church. Of all mutton-headed proceedings, I never saw the like, specially as he hoodwinked them right along, and acted worse, even, than before. You can imagine Captain Coe's feelings when, rounding up a three months' cruise, he found this six-foot-three of black devil and hypocrite snugged in the Mission house like a maggot in a breadfruit. They say he went on awful, speaking out the truth before them all, and daring Afiola to deny it. But Mrs. Tweedie she got him outside on the veranda, walking up and down with her arm through his, and pleading and going on and begging to beat the band. It shows the power she had over him, that at last he went in and asked Afiola's pardon, and the next day sent him a case of kerosene by way of reparation. I suppose if she had told him to go on his knees he would have done it, being that crazy to please her in everything.

On second thoughts, however, and after hearing how Afiola had been kicking up, he went to the king and tried to stiffen him to take a stand against Afiola, volunteering to do the job himself, if supported, and proposing to exile the fellar to Makatea, and disperse the rest of the gang about the Group gratis in the *Peep o' Day*. He said otherwise he was afraid to leave Puna Punou with such

a scoundrel loose, and threatened to write to Sydney for a man-of-war. But Maunga the king was a saphead and a coward, and he couldn't see it Coe's way at all; and not having the sense to keep his mouth shut, what does he do but traipse around the settlement, telling everybody what the captain said and wanted.

After that the Mission-house door was shut in Coe's face, and when Mrs. Tweedie passed him on the road it was with her pretty head in the air, and not looking. This nearly broke the captain's heart, and if you've ever seen a dog as has been kicked out by his master, you can picture Coe for yourself. He got very down and miserable, and talked some of chucking the Group altogether and going back to the Kingsmills, or even further, and how Henderson and Macfarlane were going to put on a steamer and run us all out. He tied up the *Peep o' Day* at a hundred and forty dollars a week and nothing coming in, making the excuse she was foul and the copper needing cleaning; and when you saw nothing doing and asked why, he flared up and said you could go to hell! And all this, if you please, for the privilege of seeing Afiola sailing up to the Mission house and being honored guest, and Mrs. Tweedie smiling her prettiest, *vice* Elijah Coe, fired! We fully thought he'd backslide onto square-face and female society, but, if anything, he grew more missionary than ever, and

nearly lammed the life out of Freddy Rice for speaking disrespectful of the Virgin Mary! You see, Coe's religion, being as it was Mrs. Tweedie, didn't make no proper distinction between sects, and he just stood up for anybody who had his name in the Bible!

Then thinking, I dessay, that absence makes the heart grow fonder, he went to sea again and put in a spell of two months about the Group; and when he got back he dressed up in his best with a red silk handkerchief around his neck, sailor fashion, and a crimson sash and patent-leather shoes, and the rest of him white drill, and went a-calling on the Mission house to see if he couldn't break into society again. But there was a wicked streak in Mrs. Tweedie, for all her pretty face and golden hair, and being too good a woman to love anybody but her husband, she found a queer kind of satisfaction in hating Coe, or pretending like she did, and driving him half-mad with the things she said to him. She regularly led on the captain to admit he loved her, and then jumped on him with both her little feet for saying it, till the poor fellar stumbled out of the house feeling he had disgraced himself awful and was never to come back no more.

She wrote him letters afterwards on scented pink paper, which made him spend days and days with his head leaning on the cabin table, wanting the worsted dog back, and the canary, and saying she

would tell her husband; and then saying he might keep them and she wouldn't! If he had treated her just like a Kanaka girl who was dead stuck on him, I guess he would have found out that women are much the same, whether with golden hair or coal-black, and that there is much the same colored devil in every one of them. But to Coe, Alethea Tweedie wasn't no human being at all, but an angel straight from heaven, and to think the angel hated him was almost more than he could bear.

He turned crankier than ever, working off steam on Rau and Ah Lum, with twenty-five cents for every swear, and nothing at night but hymns. But I guess Rau and the China boy would have gone on their knees and kowtowed to a sting ray if Coe had told them to, for they didn't have no more wills of their own than a child unborn, and everything he said, went. If he had turned pirate, they would have followed him just as meek, and would have scuttled ships and made passengers walk planks with the same devotion and zeal to please him!

But all this was by the way, so far as it availed the captain with Mrs. Tweedie, who passed him on the road as cold as ever, and received the swear-money disdainful, and never said "thank you" for it, though there was eighteen dollars in the bag and the biggest share Coe's. Afiola himself

had been getting out of favor for two months. He couldn't manage to be deacon of the church one day, and the next pirating along the coast mad drunk on orange beer; besides, the Tweedies were getting to talk native now, and got more the hang of what was going on around them. So they give Afiola a sort of drumhead court-martial, and bounced him unanimous, and all the pent-up deviltry of the man came out of him at one lick, like touching off a dynamite cartridge. Tweedie preached against him from the pulpit; the other chiefs, slow as they had been to move before, now waked up a bit, and there was a general feeling in the respectable part of the native community that he was pushing things too far. You see, he had named one of his pigs after the king, and there was more scandal over that than for all the crimes he had been guilty of; and there was a razor-backed yaller one for Tweedie, and an old sow for the queen, and porkers for the princes, and he passed insulting remarks on them till the Kanakas went wild—those that weren't of Afiola's own family, I mean; and Afiola would laugh and laugh till his great pocked face grew a dirty crimson, laying on a mat with a Winchester beside him, and sniggering as they'd bring him orange beer in a calabash.

I guess he thought he'd wind up by pulling off the biggest thing yet, for he had a kind of pride

of wickedness in him, and gloried in being the bad man of Puna Punou. He wanted to top it all now, and do something that tremendous that it would shake the whole island from Fale a Lupo to Diamond Rock. Anyway, whatever he thought or didn't think, what he did was to waylay Mrs. Tweedie one morning about ten, as she was going over to visit the native pastor's wife, who was sick; and, tying her hands and feet together with sinnet, he put her in a hammock and carried her off up the mountain; and this, if you please, in open daylight, with scores of people looking on, while she screamed and struggled and fought, and they helpless to do anything against the line of Afiola's rifles —and Tweedie himself not four hundred yards away, organizing a Y.M.C.A. for untattooed boys, and explaining how they was to play basket ball, and learn arithmetic nights!

When I heard the news, which was right off and the moment after it happened, I had only one idea in my head, and that was to reach Captain Coe as fast as the paddles could race me off to the schooner. It is in them moments that the strong man looms up like a mountain and one's cry is for a leader. But it seemed for a spell like it was a knock-out blow for Coe, and that he couldn't grapple with the thing at all, moaning and grinding his teeth, and tearing the red-dotted handkerchief off his neck like it choked him. When I tried to talk,

he swore at me terrible, saying he wanted to think, by God! and I was to shut my bloody face; and ordering the mate and the Chinaman into the lazarette to get out the arms. There was a big store of them, which the pair got out on their hands and knees, the place being cramped and low and the guns furthest in; and they broke open boxes of cartridges on the cabin floor till they ran all over. Then Coe ordered the whaleboat cleared and went ashore with nigh all hands, every one of them with a loaded rifle, and he with a twelve-bore gun; and if you ever saw the light of hell in a man's eyes, it was Coe as he formed us up on the beach and headed inland in a crowd. The whole settlement was buzzing like a hornet's nest, and they were beating a wooden drum in front of the king's house, and everybody was running every which way, telling the news, and how Mrs. Tweedie had been carried off by Afiola, and all screaming out at once, like natives do when excited.

Finding Afiola would be about as easy as the needle in the haystack, and the crews of a hundred *Peep o' Days,* and all the warriors of Fale a Lupo besides, couldn't have tracked and cornered him up the mountain. I thought Coe was acting like a hot-headed crazy fool to try, for they were bound to see him first, and could always hide if we got too close, or fight if need be, with all the points of the game in their favor. But that wasn't what

he meant to do, not he, but surrounded Afiola's two houses, and took out everybody in them—Talavao his aunt, Oloa his uncle, Filipo his brother (who was sick on a mat), and Afiola's two children, Mali and Popo, and a raft of men and women, to the number of twenty or more all told. They were scared blue at the sight of the cocked rifles, and held up their hands like lambs for the Chinaman to rope them, which he did like lashing a chest and about as tender, the tears streaming down the women's faces. But there wasn't a spark of compassion in Elijah Coe, and he never give them a thought.

He was at a white heat, and his finger was just itching on the trigger of his gun, and he never started for the beach till all the Bowery was crackling in smoke and flame. Not that our eighteen or twenty was the whole of Afiola's family in the settlement. I guess there was several hundreds of them altogether, taking it fine and large, retainers, hangers-on, and connections of one kind and another; but Coe's boldness took them by surprise, and not being in the secret of Mrs. Tweedie's carrying off, they weren't prepared or anything. But even in the time we were tying up the prisoners they began to turn ugly and bunch together and hoot, and all the way back to the beach it was touch and go whether they wouldn't rush us.

Not a soul durst ask Coe what he meant to do

as we pitched into the water and shoved off, him sitting there so grim and fierce, with his eyes smoldering in his head like coals; but there was no sound but the straining of the rowlocks, and a whimper or two from the women, and the swish and gurgle of the water along the keel. I'll never forget that boat ride if I live to be a hundred; the drums rolling and rerolling around the bay, and that strange humming of voices behind us like the wind in the rigging of a ship, and Coe and the Kanakas and the Chinaman and John Rau and the men pulling. But as for Coe's plan, we weren't long kept waiting for what it was. The prisoners were bundled into the ship's waist, with Lum to stand over them, while the mate got out the kedge and brought the schooner broadside on to the mountain. Then they bent a noose and ran up old Oloa between the masts. It was no fancy hanging with a drop calculated to his height, but just the old-fashioned kind, slow and awful, and if the steward hadn't come round with a tray of glasses and some square-face I guess I would have just sunk right down where I was. The crew made one panic-stricken gallop for the side, and popped over, nobody trying to stop them, though Rau asked, quite calm, was he to shoot, and the captain said No. The Nieue steward was the only one that didn't go, but crouched down in the scuppers with his teeth chattering.

Then Coe leaned over the rail and talked to the prisoners in the waist; told them that he was going to string up one an hour, children and all, till Mrs. Tweedie was brought back safe; and he ordered Lum to cast loose one of the old women so that she might swim ashore and carry the news. My, if she wasn't over that rail like lightning, and striking out for home with her skinny arms! Coe knew mighty well that Afiola had a string of people up the mountain keeping him informed of everything that happened—the Kanaka telegraph, we used to call it. Then, besides, up there they could see for miles, and Coe had kedged the schooner acrost the fairway so that Afiola might reckonize his relations in the rigging. You might wonder that such an unmitigated black villain would care what Coe did, so long as he had his wicked way with Mrs. Tweedie, and a whole trackless mountain to lose himself in; but there's an awful soft streak in Kanakas for their own blood, and we had his whole family in our hands, not to speak of the two kids. It seemed almost like a waste of lives to look up and see not a speck, or the least sign whatever, that was hid under the tree tops, and it was hard to convince oneself that Coe was doing the right thing, and that from those rocky cliffs there was sharp Kanaka eyes taking us all in, with Alethea Tweedie tied hand and foot, and Afiola in a sweat about his children.

The captain sat on a chair at the forrard end of the house, smoking a cigar, and occasionally searching the woods with his binoculars. There was a stack of loaded rifles beside him, and a keg of dynamite with a loose lid to it. Some of the sticks had touch-and-go fuses to them, ready to throw if they tried boarding; and sometimes he would take out his watch and look at it hard, and every time he looked the people in the waist would set up a kind of a wail. At one o'clock we ran up Filipo, Afiola's brother, and settled down to another spell of waiting. Somewheres along of three bells we saw them getting a boat out by Pita's house, and lo and behold! it was Tweedie, with the native pastor and a divinity student named Henry to pull him. When they were close enough to talk, he fell on his knees in the boat, though it was half full of bilge and slopped all over him; and he besought Captain Coe, by all that was holy, to stop murdering the innocent, and rattled on fast and scolding like he was in the pulpit. We was to leave it to God, he said, and went on like we was worse nor Afiola, the pitiful hound, like it wasn't his own wife we was doing our damnedest to save.

Captain Coe let him have his say, and then he leaned over the ship's side, holding to the starboard shrouds with one hand and taking the cigar out of his mouth with the other, and told him,

with a most deliberate spit, as how he was going on with one every hour till Mrs. Tweedie was brought back safe and sound, and when he used up them he had aboard, how he was going to land for more. He didn't speak it particular loud, and you might have thought he was talking what a hot day it was; but there was that in his voice I've never heard before or since, and you knew he'd live right up to every word he said. I guess the pastor and the student understood a little English, for when Coe finished they laid on to their oars like mad, and headed the old sieve for shore again, Tweedie in the bilge and still protesting.

At two o'clock we turned off Sosofina, Afiola's aunt. We now had three aloft, and as we rolled gently broadside on to the swell they'd swing together and swing apart till you didn't care to look at them. That hour from two to three was the very longest I ever spent in my life. It was the hottest time of day and the sun beat down unmerciful, the pitch running in the seams, and the awnings being stripped off to better fight the ship, if need be. The steward passed round sardines and buttered biscuit, and I recollect the Chinaman wolfing his right out of the can and tipping it cornerwise to drink the ile. Bar Coe, he was the coolest customer of the lot, which was the more remarkable, as he was a mild-mannered man ordinarily, given to playing the China fiddle to him-

self, and very obliging if you wanted fresh yeast or the way he curried pigeon. Rau, the Belgian, with his hairy arms and stubby figure, struck one somehow as being more in his element in so wild a business, and you took his calm for granted, like a soldier serving a gun and doing what he's told. If Coe had ordered him to set off the dynamite and blow up the ship, he would have said "Aye, aye, sir!" and obeyed, respectful and willing, like the first-class seaman and navigator he was. He had served in the Belgian navy, and the habit had stuck to him. But in all of us, after all—me and Lum and John Rau and the Nieue steward—it was Coe's spirit that had raised us to this pitch, and he had blown a little of his own breath into every one of us. We were all Elijah Coes that day, and it was only afterwards it came over us how different we had acted from our proper selves.

Well, as I said, it was drawing toward six bells, and we were keyed up tremendous, as we might expect to see the result of our work now any minute; and it was a shuddering thing to think of sending up another, and him a child. We all watched Coe out of the corner of our eye as he went on smoking his cigar, and every time he took out his watch and looked at it it seemed like my heart stopped beating.

"Three o'clock, boys!" he says, rising business-like from his chair, while Lum looked up expect-

ant, and my gizzard seemed to shrink inside me. "Three o'clock, boys!"

He hadn't no more nor got the words out of his mouth when Rau ripped out there was a canoe coming off, and we all ran pellmell for the rail. Sure enough, there was an outrigger aiming straight for us, and the fellar in it was bent double and paddling that fast that the water spurted at the bow like it was a race. When he got within a cable's length he stopped, and waved something he had in his hand, and shouted a lot of stuff we couldn't make head or tail of. Coe made motions to him to come nearer, and Rau and me did the same, till the fellar got back something of his nerve, paddling with one hand and holding the little board aloft in the other (like he might a flag of truce), and venturing toward us slower and slower, till at last Coe reached down and took the thing from him standing up.

It was a slab of fresh-cut *fuafua,* about a foot long by three inches wide, and on it, written, as I heard afterwards, in blood and spit and gunpowder, was a message from Mrs. Tweedie herself—not many words on it, and them printed, for she only had a pointed stick by way of a pen, but saying as how she was unharmed and was being brought back fast, and please, he wasn't to trice up any more of Afiola's family.

The captain read it aloud to us about a dozen

times, and then, his face working so he couldn't speak no more, he gripped hands with me, and then with John Rau, and not forgetting the Nieue steward, and then he went down the forrard ladder, and I'm blest if he didn't put his arm round the Chink, and burst out sobbing—yes, sir, like a great overwrought girl, sitting on the tool chest, limp as a rag, and wiping his eyes with the cuff of his blue-striped panjammers, the Chinaman, patting him like he might a dog, saying, "Poor captain! Never you mind, captain! She all lite now, captain," while the prisoners broke out in a big gabble of how they were saved, and piped up with a hymn.

He wasn't the man to take anything for granted, however, and after he had sort of pulled himself together and got his second wind, so to speak, he cast loose a couple more with a message that he had to have a letter on paper from Mrs. Tweedie herself, countersigned by the king, that she was at home, safe, and no harm done. He might have saved himself the trouble, for they hadn't been gone ten minutes before she came off herself, queening it in the stern of the king's great *alia*, seventy feet long, with Tweedie and Maunga, and the princes, and eighty men chorusing to the paddles, with drums aft, and a young boy dancing in the bow and keeping time with a rifle. Except for her paleness, which was like marble, and the bloody marks of the sinnet on her pretty wrists, you

wouldn't have taken her for much different than usual; and she skipped up the ladder as sprightly as you please, and made a bee line for Elijah Coe like a schoolgirl running to her pa for the holidays.

She wanted to throw herself on her knees and kiss his hands; and when he forced her up, she flung her arms around his neck and kissed him, saying he was her preserver, and how he had saved her from worse than death, and so overflowing and grateful and outspoken that nobody knew where to look, least of all the captain, who turned all colors, and couldn't say anything but "You're welcome," like a ninny.

We cleared a little space for Tweedie to pray in, which was his way of celebrating, and couldn't very well be prevented, and the king followed with a speech what he'd do to Afiola when he caught him—the tarnation liar! The crew came off, swimming in ones and twos to beg for pardon, and the prisoners were unbound and given three crates of biscuit and three barrels of pork and some boat sails to wrap the corpses in, and there was more hurrah-boys and good feeling and port wine in the cabin than you could ever have thought possible under the circumstances.

Was that all? Well, for a time it was, Coe slipping out at dawn on the ebb with a cargo of Afiola

rapscallions he was to drop, one here, one there, all around the Group, we having no further use for them in Puna Punou.

The measles struck us shortly afterwards in a Tahiti bark, and it carried off a sight of people, Afiola included, who was in a sort of armed hiding on the other side of the island. Tweedie, too, who had always been a complaining whelp, started up a cough about this time, and died. Of course, this wasn't right off, but spread over a matter of eighteen months or more, Coe coming and going regular in the *Peep o' Day,* and Mrs. Tweedie more blooming than ever.

Coe turned up from Sydney, where he had gone for a general refitting and overhaul, just as Mrs. Tweedie was taking her passage in the *Olive Branch,* missionary auxiliary barkentine for Honolula. None of the saints would have a word to say to him, calling him "the man of blood," and ordering him off the ship, as he stood his ground and wouldn't budge even when the anchor was apeak and the barkentine under steerage way. But he kept singing out for her while they tried to hustle him over the side and into his boat, and the more they hustled the louder he shouted, "Mrs. Tweedie! Mrs. Tweedie!" till at last she heard him in her cabin below, and came running up, smiling, and arranging her hair with her hands.

It was a tight place for Coe, having to do his

courting while they were moving him on like the police; but, for all that, when he went down the ladder it was with Mrs. Tweedie with him, and they pulled ashore and were married by the Kanaka pastor, and went a-honeymooning in the *Peep o' Day,* bringing up in Papiete three weeks later, to buy her some clothes, for every stitch to her name was beating up to Honolula in the *Olive Branch.*

MR. BOB

FAR away in the western Pacific, in that labyrinth of coral reefs and low, palm-rimmed isles floating between the blue of heaven and the deeper blue of sea, known to the pajama-clad, earringed traders as "the Group," and to the outer world as Micronesia—here, one burning morning there arrived a visitor from "Home," who descended, not from some tubby bark or slant-masted schooner, but Godlike from the glorious stars themselves —Christmas Day!

The Rev. Walter Kirke looked out moodily from beneath the eaves of his basket-work house, and his heart sank as he gazed across the sweltering strip of water, twenty miles wide, that divided the island of Apiang from its neighbor, Tarawa. His brother in the Lord across the strait, the perpetually unfortunate Titcombe (the Rev. J. B. Tracy Titcombe, M.A., Cam.), had sent in a proa with a message of such urgency and need that delay, let alone refusal, was utterly out of the question.

"The king has broken all his promises," wrote Titcombe, in a hand illegible from distress and agitation. "He threatens to burn the new church,

flog the members, and spear personally the leading lights of our infant congregation. Yesterday, on my remonstrating with him, he gave me twenty-four hours to leave the island, calling me at the same time a sting ray, a detached jellyfish—a white squid, together with some other local expressions of a highly wounding and contemptuous nature. The tiny fold is terrorized, and Thomas Najibika, my deacon and right-hand man, is in hourly apprehension of a massacre. My wife and little Kenneth are down with fever, and this, together with my halting knowledge of the native language, has put me at such a disadvantage that I have no alternative but to appeal to you. For Heaven's sake, please come instantly and exert yourself on my behalf, or else we may lose Tarawa for good, and put back the good work by a dozen years."

"We'll have to go, dear," said Kirke to his pretty wife.

"Yes, we'll have to go," she assented sadly.

She could not help feeling cross with the Titcombes for always muddling things—a little unjustly, perhaps—for her own missionary path had ever been so easy and untroubled. Mrs. Kirke was a woman of marked beauty, whose sweet imperiousness, sympathy, humor, and tact made her the adored of the islanders. She not only spoke native well, but with a zest and sparkle, a silver ripple of irony, ridicule, and good-fellowship that carried

everything before it. No kings ever bothered Mrs. Kirke. Even the redoubtable Tembinok, with forty boats full of armed savages, had been stemmed in his Napoleonic career and turned back by her from his projected invasion of Apiang—presenting the missionary's wife, on his departure, with a gold-inlaid Winchester that was the apple of his eye.

"I shall make Karaitch smart for this!" she said vindictively. "I sha'n't let him off with less than twenty tons of copra for my girls' school; and he'll have to apologize, too, and swear on a shark's head to behave for a year."

"We can't all have such intrepid little wives," said Kirke, putting his arm fondly about her. Experience had shown him that in native questions she was always as good as her word, and it was with a kind of proud humility he conceded her the place he was so much less able himself to fill. He had not the faintest apprehensions about the Tarawa matter. Ada would bring the king to heel in fifteen minutes, and in twenty there would be the dawn of a new peace, with stately apologies, gifts of turtle and bonito hooks, endless and troublesomely idiomatic compliments, and incidentally a little friction with the Titcombes, who would certainly resent being saved so easily.

No, Kirke wasn't afraid of Karaitch. Ada would settle Karaitch out of hand. What he dreaded was that twenty miles of water under the noonday sun,

and the problem of Daisy—Daisy, their little girl of eight, who was playing so contentedly on the floor with the presents Santa Claus had just brought her.

"Oh, Walter, I can't let Daisy go again!" cried Mrs. Kirke. "Last time she nearly died in the boat, and you know she wasn't really herself for weeks and weeks afterwards."

Daisy heard her name being spoken, and looked up. Her sleek little head and round brown eyes gave her the look of a baby seal. Such a happy baby seal that morning, with a five-shilling magic lantern, twelve biblical slides, a dolly that could squeak in the most lifelike manner, and a darling little chair!

"But leave her?" questioned Kirke, with a hopeless gesture of his hand. "And that with the island full of mutineers, and Heaven only knows to-day what deviltry and carousing?"

Mrs. Kirke thought awhile.

"Twenty miles over there—three hours," she said at last; "an hour to straighten out the king—four hours; three back, makes seven. That means being home by sundown. We can trust Nantok all right to take good care of her, and then I'll get Peter to send down an armed guard."

Kirke acquiesced in silence. He was a tall, thin man, not over-clever, whose fervent Christianity was strangely at variance with a constitutional in-

clination to see the darker side of things. He distrusted Nantok, distrusted the king's guard, felt a profound apprehension of that jeering, boisterous mob of sailors, who pigged together in Rick's old boatshed, and were numerous enough to defy every law of the island. It was terrible to him to leave his little girl in such company. Yet he recalled his last trip across the strait, when she had fainted with the heat—fainted again and again—as they had attempted, with such distress and agony, to screen her from a glare as pitiless as a furnace. He remembered dipping her, naked, all but lifeless, into the milkwarm water, till up from the transparent depths the swift, bluish glimmer of a shark warned him to snatch her in. Remembered the hopelessness of it, the terror, the despair, he himself bending to an oar, and offering every inducement his mind could think of to incite his crew to pull their hearts out. No, all that was a nightmare to look back on—never, never to be repeated.

Daisy was called over and the situation explained to her. Like all only children, living constantly in the society of her parents, and sharing their talk and plans, she was precociously old for her age, and more serious and thoughtful than a little tot ought to be. Though her lower lip trembled, and her eyes flooded with tears, she put on a brave face to it, and protested her willingness to remain with Nantok and be a good little girl.

"And mamma and papa will be back at dusk; and if they are detained, you mustn't be the least bit worried about them; and you'll let Nantok put you to bed at eight; and if you wake up and feel frightened, you are to remember the army outside, guarding you in your sleep like a little princess!"

"And Dod, too," added Daisy piously, though inwardly pleased to have the army as well.

"Oh, my lamb!" cried Mrs. Kirke, clasping her to her breast. "It breaks mamma's heart to leave her little girl on Christmas Day!"

Altogether it was a damp moment in the Kirke family, and even the missionary's eyes were suspiciously moist as he knelt beside his wife and talked hurriedly about the magic lantern, and the dolly, and what a jolly evening they'd all have when they got back from Tarawa.

Preparations were soon made. The whaleboat was got ready, and manned by a stout crew of such recent Christians that the demons of the strait had first to be appeased by two tins of salmon and six biscuit, paid secretly in advance to Nebenua, the devil-priest. Then, when all was ready, even to the breaker of brackish water, a forty-pound tin of biscuit, two hundred fresh nuts, medicine chest, compass, and five pounds of niggerhead tobacco by way of petty cash, the whole expedition was tantalized and held back by the non-arrival of the guard, who were frenziedly searching for their

boots. Why the army was so ruthlessly condemned to wear boots, is a question that was often asked and never properly answered. Nobody else wore boots—not even the king; but the military caste is proverbially dressy, and it is enough to say that the armed forces of Apiang set immense store by their boots.

At last they arrived, boots and all, a straggling, hobbling party of seven, with cartridge belts and rifles. Little Daisy was formally put in their charge; solemn pledges were given and accepted; a keg of beef, to be subsequently presented, was hedged about with innumerable restrictions. That keg—like liberty—was to be at the price of eternal vigilance. And then, when everything had been said, and explained, and threatened, the whaleboat hoisted her anchor—a coral stone—and set a straight course for Tarawa.

It was a long day—a very long day—quite the longest day in Daisy's tiny life. She successively exhausted the magic lantern, the dolly, and the chair. She went out and prattled with the army where they sprawled under the lee of the kitchen, smoking endless *pandanus* cigarettes. She helped Nantok prepare lunch—a bowl of chocolate made with condensed milk, and hot buttered toast. After lunch she had a nap with Nantok on the mats, and after that again an exciting talk about the great massacre on Tapatuea, where all Nantok's people

had been killed during that Kanaka Saint Bartholomew's. Then out to the army again, and checkers, which the army played amazingly well, beating her so often that even this pastime palled. Then——

Oh, what a sigh!

The sleek little seal was aweary, aweary. The house was so empty, so still, and there was such a void in that aching baby heart! She went into papa's room and cried on his bed. He would be drowned in the strait; savage old Karaitch would shoot him with a gun; he would be blown out to sea like Mr. Pettibone the beech-comber. The hot tears scalded her cheeks. She had always liked Mr. Pettibone. Papa called him a proff—proff—proff something, but he had always been so jolly, and his red face and funny little blue eyes rose before her out of the mist. She cried over the lost Pettibone; over Tansy the cat, that had died from eating a lizard; over Nosey, her pet chicken, that Nantok had killed by mistake one night for supper; cried over papa and mamma, far away in the whaler—totaled up all the little sadnesses of her little life, meting out tears to every one. And then, feeling greatly refreshed, she went out on the front porch, and wondered what she should do next.

Down the shore, about a mile away, there were others who found time less heavy on their hands. At the Land We Live In, a one-roomed saloon

which catered for a permanent white population of thirteen, and a transient one that varied from a cutter to a full-rigged ship—at the Land We Live In Christmas was being celebrated in a rousing fashion. To begin with, there were the mutineers of the *Lord Dundonald*, twenty-two strong, with plenty of money still to spend. Their revolt against authority had not been without some redeeming features, and an unbiased critic would have found it hard to blame them. After twenty-seven days and nights at the pumps of a four-masted sieve, the Lords had struck in a body, and forced the captain to abandon the ship and set out in three boats for Apiang. Here they double-dyed their crime by compelling the wrathful master to pay them their wages to date, from six hundred and thirty-nine pounds he had taken with him from a vessel he had fondly hoped to pump to China. Captain Latimer, with the three mates, the carpenter, and one of the hands, had sailed away south in the longboat, vowing yardarms and a man-of-war, and when last seen was sinking over the horizon in the direction of the Fiji Islands.

Well, here they all were in the Land We Live In, together with Tom Holderson, Peter Extrum, Eddy Newnes, and Long Joe Kelly, all of Apiang; Papa Benson, of Tarawa; Jones and Peabody, of Big Muggin; and crazy old Jimmy Mathison, of nowhere in particular—unless it were the nearest gin

bottle; and it was a rip-roaring Christmas, and no mistake, with bottled beer flowing like water, and songs and choruses and clog dances and hornpipes; and Papa Benson (in earrings and pink pajamas) a-blowing enough wind through his concertina to have sailed a ship. And there were girls, too, seven or eight of them, in bright trade-cotton Mother Hubbards—a bevy of black-eyed little heathen savages, who bore a hand with the trays, and added their saucy laughter to the general gayety, helping out Larry the barkeep as he drew unending corks or stopped to wipe the sweat off his forehead, saying, "Genelmen, the drinks is on Billy," or Tommy, or Long Joe, or whoever it was that was treating.

Suddenly, at the door, which had been kept shut to prevent the natives from assembling and peering in—suddenly, at the door, there was heard a faint, faint knock. The concertina stopped. Fritz, the Dutchman, said "Hoosh!" and raised his pipe for silence. The knock was repeated. Quiet descended on the Land We Live In. Larry looked up from his bottles, and in a rough and belligerent voice called out, "Come in!"

The invitation was hesitatingly obeyed, and there stood Daisy Kirke on the threshold, a sweet, faltering figure, with her guard, boots and all, lined up in the roadway. Hardly a soul in the room knew there was a little white girl on the island; and the sight of Daisy, with the red ribbon in her hair, her

dimity frock, her long stockings and pinafore, was as startling as it was unexpected.

"Howdy-do, evver'body?" said she.

There was an embarrassed silence.

"I know you better than you do me," went on Daisy confidentially, proving it with her forefinger. "That's Tommy, the cabin boy; and yonder's Mr. Mathison, the beach-comber; and you"—indicating a giant of a man with an aquiline nose and a square-cut beard—"you are Mr. Bob Fletcher, the ring-leader!"

A giggle of subdued merriment ran round the room. An instinctive respect kept it within bounds, or perhaps it was Bob Fletcher's fierce and warning look that cowed any incipient rowdyism. The brawny mutineer set her on his knee, and, in a voice harshened by thirty years' service before the mast, asked her deferentially if she fancied a glass of syrup?

"No, thank you," said Daisy politely; and then, addressing everybody in general, "papa and mamma's gone to Tarawa!"

"Now, if that ain't too bad!" put in Bob sympathetically.

"And so it just occurred to me," went on Daisy, "to do something nice to surprise them when they came back."

A profound silence greeted this remark. The devil's love of holy water is a craving compared

to the amount of love lost between a South Sea missionary and the rough white element that mocks his labors at every turn. It was the custom of the Lord Dundonalds, moreover, to hoot the Rev. Walter Kirke whenever they met him. It was a recollection of this that made the present situation so piquant and humorous.

"Besides, it seems too bad," continued Daisy, "that the natives should have such a fuss made over them, while all you white gentlemen are left out in the cold. It must look queer to Dod, and I don't believe He likes it!"

"Everything for the niggers—that's right," muttered Tom Extrum bitterly, "and not even a six-months-old newspaper for the likes of us!"

"You don't look so werry wicked," said Daisy, taking in the room with a comprehensive glance, and putting an arm around Mr. Bob's neck, as though confident of having at least one friend among the company. "I wonder if you wouldn't all like to come along to my house, and play with my magic lantern, and—and—organize a Band of Hope?"

She was abashed by the roar of laughter that followed the proposal. Papa Benson flung himself on the floor and rolled over and over. Long Joe uttered whoops of delight. Even Mr. Bob shook with speechless mirth, till the veins on his forehead stood out like strings. Never in all its

history was there such a hullabulloo in the Land We Live In. As the rumpus died down something very like remorse overwhelmed the roisterers as they saw Daisy's flushing, quivering little face, hot with mortification.

It was Mr. Bob who sprang to the rescue before the brimming tears could fall.

"I'm on!" he shouted, rising to his feet with unexpected enthusiasm. "Now, then, boys, who says 'Aye, aye' for the Band of 'Ope?"

A good part of the crowd would have preferred to stay by their spree; but so contagious is example and so sheeplike the sailor nature, that the whole room fell in with Bob, and answered his call like one man.

He swung Daisy up on his shoulder, where, from that dizzy perch, she looked back shyly at the noisy pack behind her. Secure in the conquest of the ringleader, whom intuitively she felt stronger than the rest, and kinder and more resolute, with a heart beneath his rough exterior as simple and childlike as her own, she managed to keep up her courage in spite of the loud, frightening laughter and the tipsy boisterousness and horseplay that marked the inception of the Band of Hope. Her satisfaction was suddenly checked, however, by the sight of the Kanaka girls joining the procession and making as though to follow.

"No, they mustn't come!" she cried out jeal-

ously. "Please, Mr. Mathison, tell them they mustn't come! This is to be for men only!"

"Turn them back!" thundered Bob. "Don't yer 'ear the little lady's horders? Scamper, ye jades!"

Papa Benson struck up a quickstep on the concertina, and, marching beside Bob Fletcher, helped to lead the van. The mutineers, beach-combers, and traders fell in two by two. The rear was brought up by the guard, loutish, hobbling, and out of step, bearing their rusty Springfields at all angles. In this fashion they made the missionary's house, swarmed into the neat bare inclosure of coral sand, and invaded the silent rooms.

A terrible irresolution was stealing over Daisy. Twelve slides, representing the wanderings of Saint Paul, began to seem too trifling a means of holding the attention of this enormous and expectant crowd. Besides, it came over her with a shock that she was a little hazy about Saint Paul; and then there were disturbing questions of sheets and darkened windows, and how to make it work. It was with dismay, verging on despair, that she saw the serried ranks of her recruits crowding the room to bursting, and all regarding her with humorous anticipation. But good Mr. Bob, holding her in his lap, and stroking her hair with an enormous red hand, showed a most comforting disposition to himself take the breach. At any rate, he roared

for silence; told Mr. Mathison he'd cut his liver out if he didn't belay with them there re-marks, and assumed a tone of authority that calmed the tumult of Daisy's misgivings.

"Friends," he said, "and mates, and respected genelmen *h*all, we are here, two and three gathered togetherlike, for the purpose of *h*organizing a Band of 'Ope."

"Local Number One," interrupted Billy Dutton, the donkey-man, who had had some trades'-union experience.

"Band of 'Ope, Local Number One," continued Mr. Bob, receiving the suggestion in an accommodating spirit. "And it is with great pleasure I propose the name of *h*our first president, Miss Daisy Kirke, of Apiang."

Then, my stars, wasn't there a cheer! Daisy hung her head, nestled closer to Mr. Bob, and felt all the joy of good works promptly bearing fruit.

"I don't see no reason," went on Mr. Bob, "why a false modesty, that 'as been my *h*unfailing 'andicap through life, should prevent me from nominating myself as your *h*esteemed vice president. I do not wish to seem a-soaring too 'igh, or reaching out for honors that belong to *h*abler 'eads nor mine; but I'll take the sense of the meeting in a kindly spirit, and will abide peaceable by a show of 'ands!"

When the applause had subsided, Billy Dutton

sprang up, and wanted to know "what about a recording seckitary?"

"I don't see no 'arm in the honorable genelman *h*assuming the job 'isself," said Mr. Bob, "if 'e thinks 'e's sufficient of a speller, and won't run the band into 'orrible extravagances for 'igh-priced wines and luxuries. The assessments of this band is going to be low, and the diet plain. Who says Brother Dutton ain't the man for the place? Is it you, Mr. Riley, I see raising your fist agin him? Oh, only to ax a question. Well, one thing at a time, Brother Riley. Does the meeting *h*endorse Mr. Willum Dutton for recording seckitary?"

The meeting did, vociferously and with cheers. Daisy ran and got her slate for the recording seckitary, who thereupon (after first inscribing the names of the office bearers in a shaky print) began to draw a wonderful picture of a pirate ship.

"Afore listening to the plans of our valued president," said Mr. Bob, "I propose myself to *h*offer up a few general remarks on 'Ope! Me and 'Ope is old friends, genelmen. We set sail together from the port of London, 'Ope and I, when I was a bright-faced boy that 'igh! We've bunked in together, fair weather and foul, coming on this thirty year. We 'ave set in our time, me and 'Ope, on the bottom of a capsized schooner, ore laden out of Mazatlan, with our tongues 'anging out like the tails of some vallyble new kind of a black dorg.

'Ope and I took the Chainy coast once on a chicken coop. 'Ope and I, when we 'ad the dollars, blew them in right royal. 'Ope and I, when we 'adn't none, tightened our belts and cheered each other *h*up. Looking back over all them years, I want to stand *h*up and testify right 'ere to the best friend of the sailorman, bar none, and p'r'aps the *h*only one he ever truly 'ad—and that's 'Ope, God bless her!"

Amid the ensuing uproar, which jarred the walls of that prim missionary residence like an explosion of dynamite, spilling plates off dressers and cockbilling texts, and arresting the astonished clock at four forty-six, little Daisy was trying to nerve herself to address the assembled company. The unforeseen docility of the band had put new ideas in that sleek, baby-seal head. Odds and ends of tracts and storybooks recurred to her. Infantile ambitions awoke and clamored. But it was daunting, just the same, to confront those rows of eyes, and those great big, unshaved, shaggy-looking faces, all keenly waiting for her to speak.

"Now, then, little lady," said the vice president, "'ere's your Band of 'Ope, a-panting to set its 'and to the plow!"

Daisy cleared her throat. Pride and timidity struggled with each other in that eager little countenance. Had it not been for an encouraging squeeze from Mr. Bob, who knows but what she

might have burst into tears, and disgraced herself before the whole band. But the squeeze, coming exactly at the right time, averted so mortifying a catastrophe.

"My dear friends," began Daisy, catching with unconscious mimicry some of the rounded tones of her father's voice—"my dear, kind friends!"

"Well, go on," cried Mr. Bob; "that's a swell start! That's the way to wake them up!"

"Hear! hear!" (This from a dozen places.)

"I have called you togevver," went on Daisy bravely, "so we might enjoy the travels of Saint Paul, which belongs to the magic lantern Santa Claus brought me this morning for Christmas, because I'm such a good little girl. Saint Paul was a kind of a sailor, too, and got shipwrecked, like Mr. Bob, in an awful storm. I used to know all about Saint Paul, but somehow I've got mixed up about him since. Perhaps one of our members will oblige, so we'll know what the slides are about when we get wound to them?"

There was a profound silence. No one volunteered. Billy Dutton, looking up from the pirate ship, to which he was adding some finishing touches, said he was afeared the president would find them a sad, ignorant lot of ignorpotammusses.

"Then we'll just have to get along without Saint Paul," said Daisy regretfully. "Perhaps it is as well, too, for Bands of Hope isn't only for amoose-

ment, but to do good, and help uvvers, and carry the glad tidings right and left into the darkest corners of the earth."

"Gee-whilikins!" exclaimed Sammy Nesbit, "where's this we're fetching up to, mates?"

"Silence! *H*order! Shut your face! Dry up, there, Sammy!" roared the Band of Hope.

"I was finking," went on the president, confidentially and undisturbed, "why a nice little surprise for papa wouldn't be as good an idea as any. It's an awful long way to Tarawa and back, and papa's never been werry strong since the fever he got in New Guinea, before he married mamma with Mr. Chalmers."

"Wot sort of a surprise *h*exactly?" asked the vice president with an expression of some doubt.

"Putting up mottoes *w*ound the walls," returned Daisy, "and green branches and palmleaves and texes and Merry Christmas, like grandpapa's in Devonshire, when I was a little tiny winy girl. And papa will be so pleased and happy and surprised that I know he'll just love it, and won't never feel tired at all!"

The Band of Hope, who seemed given to singular and inextinguishable fits of laughter, promptly went off into another paroxysm; and laughter with the Band of Hope was no drawing-room performance, no polite titter behind an upraised hand. When the Band of Hope laughed. it rolled on the

floor, beat its clenched fists against neighboring backs, screamed, huzzaed, cat-called, kicked pajama legs in the air, and shook the pictures off the walls. Mr. Bob seemed to be the only one who knew how to behave, but even Mr. Bob grew crimson in the face, and choked, and opened his mouth till you could see way down his froat.

"Genelmen," he said, when at last he had somewhat recovered, "you've listened to our *h*orders, and I'll *h*only remind you that them that *h*ain't with us is agin us, as Saint Paul says. Backsliders and goats may return to the bar, but me and the fleecy sheep is agoing to see this thing through, and do our dooty *h*under the regilations by Board of Trade *h*appointed. Goats, as I said afore, will kindly rise and step out!"

"We ain't no blooming quitters," spoke up Billy Dutton. "Goats, nothing, you wall-eyed old ram! You want to cinch all the texes for yesself, and make a running with our lovely president. But we are on to you, Bob Fletcher, and I voice the sentimomgs of the whole band when I says with Saint John, in the forty-first epistle to the Proosians, 'Wot you put your fist to, that do it with all yer might!'"

"Aye, aye!" chorused the band with boisterous approval.

"Then *h*up and work, you devils!" exclaimed the vice president. "Pull out that table, Mack;

and you, there, bear a 'and to 'elp 'im, 'Enery. Set *h*up the little chair, Williams! Easy with Saint Paul, you, Tommy, or you'll crack him sure—and lay the whole caboodlum on the shelf, *h*out of 'arm's way! Lively, lads—lively!"

Bob lifted Daisy in his arms, and carrying her to the table, installed her comfortably in the little chair.

"Captain's bridge," he said; "and if anything ain't right, or just *h*according to your *h*idears, you sing out to the lower deck, loud and 'earty; only mind you don't get *h*excited and spill orf!"

Daisy's eyes danced, and her timidity all vanished as she saw the jovial and obedient band grouping together and hotly discussing the proposed decorations. Distances were measured with tarry thumbs. A party of six was told off to climb the cocoa palms across the road; while another, shouting and hallooing like schoolboys, was dispatched to Holderson's station to get sinnet. There was a noisy wrangle over spelling. "I never seed it like that," said one, squinting over Billy's slate, "and I don't believe nobody else ever did neither." "For the love of Mike," roared another, "let's stick to them words we're all agreed on, and keep off of that thorological grass!" "Man and boy, I've been to sea this thirty years," exclaimed Mr. Bob with crushing vehemence, "and there warn't no T in Christmas then, and there

ain't now! C-R-I-S-S-M-A-S, you son of a sea cook, and I know *h*every letter of it like the palm of me 'and!"

In a corner, dispassionately aloof from all the bustle and argument, Papa Benson, that venerable dandy of the pink pajamas, pumped up the concertina, and drew melodiously on his ancient repertoire. To the inspiring strains of "In Her Hair She Wore a White Camellia," "Oh, Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out To-night?" and the "Mulligatawny Guards," the good work progressed with sailorlike speed and system. The bare, dreary room grew gay with greenery. Stitched to the matting walls with sinnet there appeared letters, words, and finally complete inscriptions: PEAS ON ERTH AND GOODWILL TOWARDS MAN; DAISY KIRKE, THE SEAMAN'S STAR; MERRY CRISSMAS, and GOD BLESS OUR HOM.

Daisy clapped her hands with delight, and did not stint her praise or approval. Occasionally she would stand up on the "bridge" to anxiously point out a crooked letter, or call attention to a doubtful spelling; and her little heart overflowed with satisfaction at the brisk "Aye, aye, Miss!" that greeted her smallest criticism. Mr. Bob worked like a horse, and not only made things jump, but kept a sharp watch as well on the unguarded utterances of his mates. Once, at some remark of Mr. Tod's, he flared up like a lion, and stepping close to Mr.

Tod, with his fist clenched, said, "Drop that, Toddy—d'ye 'ear—drop it!" and stared at him so fierce and splendid, that Mr. Tod fell back and mumbled something about "No offense," and "It kinder ripped out unbeknownst, Bob, old cock!"

By the time it was all finished dusk was falling. The room had been beautifully swept out, and likewise the porch, and Mr. Bell was in the act of dancing a fascinating clog to Papa Benson's "Soldier's Joy" on the concertina, when Nantok rushed in, shouting that Mr. Kirke was coming. And, indeed, she had no sooner given the news than it was confirmed by the whaler's crew, whose voices could be heard far across the water, lustily singing at their paddles.

A sort of consternation descended on the Band of Hope. "Hell!" exclaimed Mr. Dutton, and dropped his broom with a crash. There was a mad scurry to escape. The little president was forgotten in the pellmell rush, and from the height of her table she perceived her friends flying away without a word of farewell. No, not all. The faithful Mr. Bob, quiet and masterful even in that panicky moment of the missionary's return, came up to her, and taking her hand in both his own, nuzzled it long and lovingly against his cheek.

"Little Daisy," he said, and his voice sounded kind of strange and different, "I want you to give a message to your pa—a message from me, you say

to 'im—and that is, 'e'll never 'ave no more trouble with the boys down the shore. And if any of them gets fresh, or gives 'im any lip, or 'oots—you tell 'im this, Daisy—I'll break every bone of 'is body, so 'elp me, Moses. And it *h*ain't because of 'im, or anythink the like of that, but because he's the father of the darlingest little gal that *h*ever breathed, and the sweetest and the dearest."

Daisy flung her arms around his neck and kissed him; and as her face pressed his, rough as mahogany and hairy as a mat, she felt it all wet with tears.

Daisy was still wondering what it was that could make Mr. Bob cry, when he suddenly let her go, and walked out of the door in his funny, heavy, lurching sea walk, looking straight before him, and unheeding the "Happy Noo Year, Mr. Bob!" she called after him in a pitiful little voice.

"Poor Mr. Bob!" said Daisy to herself; and then, happening to put her hand to her hair, she discovered that the red ribbon was gone!

"He must have stole it for a keepsake when I was kissing him!" she exclaimed. "Oh, you bad, bad Mr. Bob!"

But her eyes sparkled nevertheless, as she ran out to greet papa and mamma.

OLD DIBS

His beginnings was a mystery, where he come from a conjecture, and his business in Manihiki Island one of them things that bothered a fellow in his sleep and yapped at his heels when he was awake. Captain Corker had picked him up at Penrhyn, and the trader there said he had been landed from a barkentine, lumber laden, from Portland, and from there back there was a haze on his past thicker than Bobby Carter's. Leastways, with Bobby there was his forty-five different stories to account for the leg-iron scars on his ankles, but with Old Dibs you hadn't even that to chew on. Nothing but five large new trunks and the clothes he stood in. Remarkable clothes, too, they were, for a coral island in the mid Pacific, being invariably a stovepipe hat and a Prince Albert coat, with trousers changing from pearl gray to lead color, with stripes, till you'd think he'd melt!

He was a fine man to look at, about sixty years of age, very portly and pleasant spoken, and everything he said sounded important, even if it was only about the weather or why cocoanut milk always gave him cramps. He said his name was Smith. People who change their names seem al-

ways to change it to Smith, till you wonder sometimes they don't choose Jones, or maybe Patterson, or Wilkins. But you'll notice it is Smith every time, though we always called him Old Dibs, because of the money that he had and threw around so regardless.

My first sight of him was on the front porch, mopping his forehead, and asking whether he might have board and lodging by the week. I told him that we hardly carried style enough for a gentleman like him, but all we had he was welcome to —and if not too long—for nothing. He seemed pleased at this, and more pleased still when he looked over our big bedroom and noticed my wife's smiling, comely face. She's only a Kanaka girl, but I wouldn't trade her for a million. And he laid down a shining twenty-dollar gold piece and asked if that would do every Tuesday?

Now I am as fond of money as any man, but I'm not a pirate, and so I said it was too much. But he wouldn't take no denial, and flung it down on the trade-room counter again, saying he counted it settled. Then I turned to with his trunks, told my wife to bundle out into the boatshed, and opened beer.

"Making a long stay, sir?" said I.

"I hardly know, Bill," he said. (I had told him my name was Bill.) "I hardly know, Bill," and with that he heaved a tremendous sigh.

"We don't often have visitors here," I said. "The last was eighteen men of the British bark *Wolverine*, in boats, from French Frigate Shoals, where they were cast away."

"I'm looking for a quiet place to end my days in," he says.

"Well, I guess you've found it," I says.

"It looks as though I had, Bill," he answers, gazing seaward where the palms was bending in the trade breeze and there was nothing but the speck of Captain Corker's schooner beating out. I could see he was pretty downhearted, and though I set the music box going to cheer him and asked if he fancied a nice mess of gulls' eggs for supper, it wasn't no good, and finally he went into his room and set out the rest of the day on one of the trunks.

I went along the same evening to talk it over with Tom Riley, the other trader in Manihiki, who, in spite of our being in opposition and all that, was more like my own born brother than a rival in business. We never let down the price of shell or copra on each other, and lined up shoulder to shoulder if a third party tried to break in, and so we had enough for both of us and a tidy bit over. Tom was afire to hear all about Old Dibs, and had been getting bulletins the whole afternoon from the Kanakas, down to the twenty dollars and the five trunks, and even the way he sighed.

Tom knew right away he was a defaulter, and said we were in powerful luck to have got him. It was fine of Tom to take it like that, for what luck there was was mine, and he said he'd help out with chickens and fresh fish and some extra superior canned stuff he had, so that Old Dibs would be comfortable and want to stay. Tom was a good deal like that professor who could make a prehistoric animal out of one prehistoric bone, and then, when later on they discovered the whole beast entire, it was head and tail with the one he had drawn on the blackboard. And by the time the square-face had made a second round, Tom's fancy had flown higher than a yellow-back novel, Old Dibs being dead, blessing me with his last breath and making me the heir of all his riches!

Tom walked home with me, still talking, for we had now bought a ninety-ton schooner with my legacy, me captain and him supercargo, and we had taken out French naturalization papers so we might be free of the Paumotu and Tubuai groups. When we said good night, whispering so as not to disturb Old Dibs, who was snoring out serene, it had grown to be a fleet, with headquarters at Papiete, and a steam service to 'Frisco! We were a pair of boys, both of us, and could make squid taste like lamb chops just by telling ourselves it was so!

I reckon Old Dibs was a little suspicious of me and Tom, and small blame to him for that, the

Islands being pretty full of tough customers, with never no law nor order nor nobody to appeal to in trouble unless it was your gun. He made me put a stout bolt on his door and chicken wire over the windows, and always slept with the lamp burning in his room; and it was noticeable, too, that he never cared to wander far away from the house. He was given to playing the flute in the stern of an old whaleboat, which was drawn up near the station with a cocoanut shelter over it. He never went anywhere, except to the native pastor's (Iosefo his name was). I suppose he felt a kind of protection in him—Iosefo being the nearest thing to an official in the island—and he made himself very solid in that quarter, giving to the church lavish and going there every Sunday. He always come back from them visits with a ruminating look in his eye, and the first thing he did was to make a bee line for his room, like somebody might have been tampering with his trunks.

Finally one day he took me aside and said: "Bill, that Iosefo is a very agreeable man, and if it would be the same to you, I'd like to have him a little about the house."

"Why, Mr. Smith," I said, "you needn't have troubled to ask me that; any friend of yours is welcome, I am sure, and I never saw no harm in Iosefo, even if he is a missionary."

I thought he meant to have the fellow in to talk

with him or play checkers, to while away the time that hung so heavy on his hands. But it wasn't this at all—except for a halfway pretense at the beginning. No; he paid Iosefo ten dollars a week, for what do you think? To sit on one of his trunks (*the* trunk, I reckon) from seven in the morning till six at night, barring service time Sundays. Yes, sir; nothing else than a squatting sentry, mounting guard over the boodle inside the trunk, nd protecting it from me! I wonder what the home missionary society would have said to see Brother Iosefo yawning all day on the top of a trunk, or writing his sermon on his knee, Saturdays!

At first I felt pretty hot about it, for it smacked too much of setting a thief to catch a thief, or at least offsetting the pastor and me like the compensating idea of a ship's chronometer; but my wife liked the respectability it give us before the natives; and Tom said my resenting it would be like putting the cap on my head. So I acted like I didn't give a whoop, the one way or the other.

And then it wasn't easy to be anything but fond of Old Dibs, for he was a nice man to live with, never turning up his nose at the poor food we give him, and always so kind and polite to Sarah, my wife, that she fairly idolized him. He was a real gentleman through and through, and if his money (he called it his "papers," his valuable

"papers") weighed heavy on his mind, I guess I'd have been no better in his shoes, having to trust to strangers who might cut your throat. He had the whole island to roam over now, instead of being cooped up like a chicken in a coop, and we all noticed what a change in him it made for the better, throwing off flesh, and not panting so heavy between the spells of his flute, and walking with his head in the air like the island belonged to him.

He wasn't much of a fluter, playing mostly from notes, and often picking them out so slow that you'd forget what the tune began like. He despised simple things like "Way Down Upon the Suwanee River," and the difficult things seemed to despise *him!* But he stuck at it indefatiguable, and blew enough wind through his flute to have sailed a ship. After breakfast in the morning, which he took in his panjammers like me, he would dress himself up nice in his Prince Albert, give his topper a wipe, and start away with the flute and a roll of music in a natty little case, like he was off to the Bank for the day. The only thing that ruffled him any was the children, about eighty of them, who always went along, too, and set in a circle around him when he played. I told him they'd soon tire of tagging after him, which he said he was mighty glad to hear; but if it was flies, they couldn't have been more pertinacious. I spoke to

the king about it, and Old Dibs he complained to Iosefo, but it only seemed to whoop it up and add to the procession. The king said if he'd just flute in one place, he would put a taboo around it which neither children nor grown-ups would cross; but Old Dibs said that the looking on, even from a distance, would be quite as disturbing as being sprawled all over; and so the children followed him unabated.

Then I had a happy thought, and suggested the graveyard! This was a walled-in inclosure, perhaps a hundred feet each way, on the weather side of the island, and on a windy day, with the surf thundering in, it was the lonesomest spot where a man could find himself. The natives left it alone at all times, except to bury somebody, and none of them came nearer to it than they could help. The Kanakas have a powerful dread of spirits, and even in the daytime they'd give the place a wide berth. The walls, too, being about seven feet high, prevented the children from peeking in, except at the gateway, which was so narrow that it was easy to get out of view.

Old Dibs perked up at this and cottoned to the idea tremendous; and the graveyard soon become his regular stamping ground, except when there was a funeral. He rigged up a little shelter for himself in the center, with a music stand I made for him out of scantling; and often he took his

lunch in his pocket and spent the whole day. Not a child ventured to show himself, and he had it as much to himself as though he owned it; and he could lay his stovepipe down now without any fear of its being greased up or sat on. It led to his asking a raft of questions about the natives and their superstitions, and how none of them ventured to go near the place unless in a big party. He came back to that again and again, and always with the same interest. I ought to have suspected what was running in his head, but I didn't. In fack, we had all settled down now like we had always lived together, and I didn't bother any more about him, or what he said or did, than if he had been my wife's father! It was a good deal like having a rich uncle to stay with you, and after the first excitement you took it all as a matter of course.

Even Iosefo, sitting on the trunk in the bedroom, became one of them things that ran into habit; and in some ways it was a good idea, too, for it brought custom to the store, what with the deacons coming over to talk about church affairs, and the Committee on Ways and Means meeting there regular. Even the gold twenty every week settled down in the same channel of routine, and I didn't bite it any more, as I used to do, nor hold it in my hand wondering where it come from. I just put it away with the rest and thought no more about it. The only concern of me and Sarah was

to feed up the old fellow to the best of our ability and try and make him pleased.

We had been running along like this for I don't know how long, when one night, toward the small hours, a singular thing happened. I was sleeping very light, and I woke up all of a sudden and saw Old Dibs standing in the doorway! He had a candle in his hand and bulked up enormous in his red silk dressing gown, and there was a wild look on his unshaved face.

I held my breath and watched him through my half-shut eyes—watched him for quite a spell, till he softly tiptoed away again in his naked feet, and I heard the door close behind him in the house. I waited a long while wondering what to do, and what there could be in the boatshed to bring him out at such an unlikely hour. At first I was for getting my rifle and sitting up the balance of the night; but then, as I waked up more and tried to think it out, it seemed that he had a better right to be afraid of me than me of *him*. It couldn't be to do me no harm, I reckoned, but probably to assure himself that I was asleep.

He was plainly up to something, and it was equally plain he didn't want me to know it. So I got out of bed—if you can call a stack of mats and a schooner's topsail a bed—and lit out to see what was doing. It was no good trying to get into the house, for Old Dibs had nailed the keys

and handed them out every morning through the winder when I went to take him his shaving water. But the curtains of the bedroom weren't extra close, and if I could get up on the veranda without too much of a creaking I knew I could see in all right. There's a lot of cat in a sailor, even to the nine lives and the dislike of getting wet, and I was soon on my knees at the sill, taking in the performance.

The room was lit up as usual, and all the big five trunks were open, with Old Dibs diving into them like he was packing for the morning train. Leastways, that was my first thought; the second was, that something stranger than that was up, and that people didn't usually go traveling with an outfit of pinkish paper cut into shavings. You've seen them, haven't you?—the kind of packing they put into music boxes, fine toys, and the like, flummoxy twisted paper ravelings that protect the varnish and have no weight to speak of. Well, that was what was in them trunks, and Old Dibs was pawing it out till it stuck up in the room, yards high, like a mountain. Occasionally he seemed to strike something harder than paper—something that would take both his hands to lift—and it was only a little clinking canvas bag that big.

Money? Of course it was money! And he was stacking it in a leather dress-suit case laid on the floor next his bed.

You could see he was nervous by the way he

kept looking behind him; and once, when a rat ran across the attic, he jumped awful and the whole floor shook. It was a queer sensation to look right into a man's eyes and him not see you, which I did with Old Dibs again and again as he'd stop and listen. I ought to have said that one of the trunks was clothes all right, but even here there was three or four bags of coin, which he got out and added to the others.

Then he counted the bags and tried to turn the top of the suit case on them, but couldn't manage it. He arranged them first this way and then that way, but there was always about a dozen outstanding. The canvas itself was very coarse, and there was lots to spare, the slack being turned over and over, and tied with heavy twine extra. Then he took them all out, and slitting them open, just let the stuff rip naked.

Lord! but it was a dandy sight, a dazzle of double eagles cascading like a river, and so swift that you couldn't pretend to count them! He seemed satisfied to go on like that, cutting one open after the other, till the suit case brimmed up solid. There was fifty-eight bags in all, and the Lord only knows how much in each; but, as I said, it took both his hands to lift a single one. I reckon I didn't know there was so much money in all the world, and it came over me afresh how fond I was of Old Dibs, and how good I was going to be to him.

When the last bag was emptied he thought he'd put back the suit case into one of the trunks, never recollecting that he might as well have tried to lift a locomotive. Then he laid hands on just the handle at one end, and he couldn't even shift it. You disremember how heavy gold is, seeing so little of it, and counting a hundred dollars a fortune. But he had there, considering the trunks weighed the usual amount, say about a hundred and fifty pounds each, and gold at nearly twenty dollars an ounce—well, the next day Tom worked it out to about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Think of it! With nothing between it and me but some chicken wire and an old gentleman in a dressing gown! It would have seemed a snap to some people, but I never made a dishonest dollar in my life—except in the way of trade, and then it was to natives (who water copra on you and square the difference); and he was in no more danger of harm than if it had been Lima beans.

Then—to get along with my yarn—he took the comforter off the bed, and setting it down flat on the floor, begun to cover it with double handfuls ranged in rows, till he had worked down the suit case to where he could lift it. He carried it over to the nearest trunk, placed it snug in the bottom, and started to load it up again from the stacks on the quilt. I don't know how long he took to do it,

but it was quite a time, and he looked pretty well tired out when it was over, and he sat back in the rocker and rocked—me still glued at the winder—and he reached out for his flute and put it to his lips (though he didn't blow into it), and worked his fingers like he was playing a piece. After a time he laid it down, and drawing his dressing gown closer around him, took another go at filling up the trunks again with the paper packing.

This seemed a good time for me to skip, which I did more cautious than ever, my heart beating that loud I wonder he didn't hear me. I felt for my pipe in the dark, and went out under the stars to the edge of the lagoon, to think it all over. You might wonder what I had to do with it unless it was to make away with him and scoop the pool for me and Tom; but, as I said before, I wasn't that kind of a man, and millions wouldn't have made no difference. But I was in a sort of tremble for the old fellow himself, for what was he doing alone with it in the far Pacific, unless there were others after him, hotfoot?

Wherever there's a carcass there's sharks to eat it, though you may have sailed a week and not seen a fin; and human sharks have the longest scent of any, especially when they have the law on their side and courts of justice behind them. I wanted to keep the money in the family, so to speak, and I was not only unwilling to harm Old

Dibs myself, but I didn't want no others to harm him neither.

I talked it over with Tom next morning, till the eyes nearly bulged out of his head. Tom was less of a pirate even than me, but he had to have his fling in fancy, being, as I said, one of them natural-born yarners, and he never got back to earth till we had poisoned Old Dibs (wavering between Rough on Rats and powdered glass), covered up all traces of the crime, divided the money equal, and sailed away West in his five-ton cutter, to bring up at last in one of the Line islands. After arranging it all to the last dot, even to the name of our ninety-ton schooner, and the very bank in Sydney where we'd lay the stuff in our joint names, he said there was only one thing to do, and that was to warn Old Dibs, and arrange some kind of a scheme to protect him.

"They are bound to run him down," said Tom. "A man that skips out with nothing, and a man that skips out with a quarter of a million, are in two different classes; and it wouldn't surprise me the least bit if there was six ships aiming for Manihiki simultaneous."

By the time I started back to find Old Dibs I was worked up to quite a fever, and I'd keep looking over my shoulder expecting every minute to see one of them six ships in the pass. He had finished breakfast and had gone, and so I followed

him over to the weather side, where, as usual, he was sitting under his tarpaulin in the graveyard, tootling for all he was worth. He looked up, a little surprised to see me, and I guess ships were running through his head also, for that was his first question.

I sat down on a near-by grave.

"The fack is, Mr. Smith," I said, very meaningly, "you paid me a little visit last night and I paid you one."

"Oh, my God!" he said, turning whiter than paper, and the voice coming out of him like an old man's.

"There's no 'my God' about it," I said. "But me and Tom Riley's been talking it over, and we'd like to bear a hand to help you."

"It's mine," he said, very defiant, and trembling. "It's mine, every penny of it, and honest come by."

"No doubt," I said, "but would I be guessing wrong if there were others who didn't think so?"

"There *are* others," he said at last, seeing, I suppose, that my face looked friendly, and realizing that me and Tom would hardly take this tack if we meant to massacre him in his sleep.

"Mr. Smith," I said, "you never had two better friends than Bill Hargus or Tom Riley."

He laid down his flute.

"I'd never feel in any danger with that good

wife of yours about," he said. It didn't seem quite the right remark under the circumstance, but there was a power of truth back of it. That girl of mine was regularly struck on Old Dibs, and, being a Tongan, was full of the Old Nick, and would have bit my ear off if I had lifted my hand to him. The two of them had patched up an adoption arrangement, him being her father, and she used to play *suipi* with him, and taught him to repeat Psalms in native. It's only another proof how women are the same everywhere, and how far it goes with them to be treated with a little respeck and consideration.

"You have a plan?" he says. "Well, Bill, what is it?"

"It's a plan to get a plan," I said. "What chance would you have as things are now?"

"Chance?" he inquires.

"You'd be in irons and aboard, before you'd know what had happened to you," I said.

He looked at me a long time and then heaved a sigh.

"I'd do for myself first," he said. "They'll never put me in the dock so long as I have a pistol and the will to use it on myself."

"I think me and Tom could improve on that," said I.

"This island's too small to hide in," he said. "No background," he said. "I was looking for

a place where there was mountains and inland country—and maybe caves."

"You never could make a success of it by yourself," I said. "You couldn't in an island made to order, with electric buttons and trapdoors let into the granite. But me and you and Tom might, and if you've the mind to, we will."

He was kind of over his panic by this time, and I guess he saw the sense of it all.

"Bill," he said, "it's a weight off my mind to have you know the truth. Fetch along Tom, and I'll do anything you two say, for I've nearly split my old head trying to find a way out; but what could I do single handed?"

"Tom's a corker," I said. "He's got an imagination like a box factory. If I was in a tight place like yours, I'd sail the world around just to find Tom Riley."

"Let's call him in, then," he says, "for, as things are now, if they should strike this island, I'm a dead man!" And with that he took up his flute again and fluted very thoughtful and low, while I made a line for Tom's station.

Tom was as happy as a lawyer with his first case. He hurried along, with a bottle of beer in each pocket and a memorandum book to write in, and just gloried in the whole business. It was like one of his own yarns come true, and he had to pinch himself to make sure he wasn't dreaming. He took

hold right off; and it was pleasant to watch Old Dibs setting back on a grave, with the comfortable air of a man that's being taken charge of by experts. I won't go into all that we arranged and didn't do, it being enough to say what we *did*, Tom beginning a bit wild about putting contact mines in the channel and importing a submarine boat from Sydney, and coming down gradual to what the poet calls human nature's daily food. This was, to rig a platform in a giant *fao* tree that stood in the middle of the island, about three miles down the coast, and fix it up with food and things, for Old Dibs to camp in.

The idea was to hide him till dark in the attic of my house, and then to put him up the tree for as long as the ship stayed by us. Tom said I could easily stand off my house being searched for a few hours, even if it was a man-of-war that come, telling them they might do it to-morrow. Then Tom said we'd have to take Iosefo, the native pastor, into it part way, making him preach from the pulpit and order the people to deny all knowledge of Old Dibs if they were asked questions about him by strangers. Tom said the important thing was to gain the first day's start; for though it wasn't in reason to expect the whole island, man, woman, and child, to keep the secret, we might be pretty sure it wouldn't leak out under twenty-four hours. Then, last of all, we were to make away with all

Old Dibs's trunks, packing what clothes he had, and that into camphor-wood chests, which would occasion no remark, specially if they were covered over on the top with trade dresses and hats, and such like.

Old Dibs liked it all tiptop, and, more than anything, Tom's honest, willing face; but he shied a bit when we walked along to the tree in question, and looked up sixty feet into the sky, where he was to hang out on his little raft.

"Good heavens, Riley!" he says, "do you take me for a bird, or what?"

But Tom talked him round, showing how we'd rig a boatswain's chair on a tackle, and a sort of rustic monkey-rail to keep him from being dizzy, and had an answer ready for every one of old Dibs's criticisms. Tom and me, having been seafaring men, couldn't see no trouble about it, and the only thing to consider serious was how much the platform might show through the trees, and whether or not the upper boughs were strong enough to hold. We went up to make sure, straddling out on them, and bobbing up and down, and choosing a couple of nice forks for where we'd lay the main cross-piece. Tom tied his handkerchief around a likely bough, to mark the place for the block and give us a clean hoist from below, and we both come down very cheerful with the prospect.

Old Dibs seemed less gay about it, and had

thought up a lot of fresh objections; but Tom said there was only one thing to worry about, and that was whether the whole concern wouldn't show plain against the sky. We got off a ways to take a look, and very unsatisfying it was, too. A big, leafy tree seems a mighty solid affair, till you stand off and look right through it; and Old Dibs was for giving up the idea and trying the cellar, which was Tom's other notion. But the tree business appealed to Tom more, and he explained how we'd paint the contraption green, and how people, when they were walking, never looked up, but ahead; and how unwholesome a cellar would be, and likely to give Old Dibs the rheumatics; not to speak of pigs rooting him out, and no air to speak of.

"Then think of the view," said Tom, who was as happy as a sand boy and in a bully humor, "and so close to the stars, Mr. Smith, that you can pick them down for lights to your cigar!"

Old Dibs smiled a sickly smile, like he was unbending to a pair of kids.

"Have it your own way, then, Riley," says he, "but you're responsible for the thing being a success, and don't look for me to dance tight ropes or do monkey on a stick."

"I'd engage to put a cow up there," said Tom, not overpolite, though he meant no harm, "or a parlor organ, with the young lady to play it."

"Mr. Smith," said I, "you'll only need shut your eyes and trust to us, and take it all as it comes."

"Boys," said Old Dibs, kind of solemn and helplesslike, "you'll do the square thing by me, won't you? You won't sell an old man for blood money? You won't get me up there and then strike a trade with them that's tracking me down?"

You ought to have seen Tom Riley's face at that! I was afraid there would be a bust-up then and there. But all he did was to walk faster ahead, like he didn't care to talk to us any more, and gave us the broad of his back. Old Dibs ran after him and caught his arm, panting out he was sorry and all that, and how Tom was to put himself in his place, with the whole world banded against him. I felt sorry to see the old fellow eating dirt, and trotting along so fat and wheezy, with Tom almost pushing him off like a beggar, and it was like spring sunshine when Tom turned square around and said:

"Hell! that's all right, Mr. Smith." And I guess it was Old Dibs's face that needed watching, it was beaming and happy, specially when they shook hands on it, and we all three walked along abreast, like a father and his two sons on the way to the bar.

Tom didn't let grass grow under his feet, and he went at it all with a rush, beginning first of

all with Iosefo, the Kanaka pastor. Natives are never so helpful and willing as when you're egging them on to do something they shouldn't, and he fell in with the preaching idea, and wanted to start right away. But they finally decided it had better be a monthly affair, so the natives shouldn't lose track of it, and Iosefo commenced the first Sunday. Anybody that gave away Old Dibs was to have his house burned in this world and his soul in the next; and Iosefo laid it on thick about our all loving him, and what a friend he has proved himself to the island; and when he reached the point where he announced that Old Dibs had contributed fifty dollars toward the fund for the new church, you could feel a rustle go through the whole congregation, and a general gasp of satisfaction. Iosefo drew a fancy picture of Judas hanging himself, and brought it up to date with Old Dibs, and what a scaly thing it was to do anyway. He let himself rip in all directions, even to the persecutions in what he called the White Country, which he said Old Dibs had endured for religion's sake, and how he had been thrown to the lions in the Colossium.

Old Dibs sat there as smug as smug, little knowing how the agony was being piled on his bald head; and just when Iosefo was making him cow the lions with a glance, Old Dibs took the specs off his nose and wiped them, while everybody was

worked up tremendous to know whether he had been eat or not. Iosefo was no slouch when he once got his hand in, and carried it over to the next number like a story in a magazine, the Kanakas all going out buzzing, wishing it was Sunday week, and eyeing Old Dibs with veneration.

The platform was number two on the list, and me and Tom, with the measurements we had taken in the tree, made a very neat job of it, and painted it green topside and bottom. We laid it together in Tom's shed, and got in Old Dibs to see if it would fit him, which it did beautiful, being six foot six by two and a half. Tom explained we'd put a natty railing around it, likewise painted green, and carry a width of fine netting below, so that pillows or things shouldn't slip overboard. Tom was hurt at Old Dibs not being more enthusiastic, and finally said: "Hell! Mr. Smith, what are you sticking at?"

"It'll never sustain the coin," said Old Dibs, jouncing up and down on it like a dancing hippopotamus.

"You weren't meaning to take that up, too?" cries Tom.

"I thought that was part of the scheme?" said Old Dibs. "Why, you said a whole cow yourself. Didn't he, Bill?"

This was a facer for Tom, but all he asked was how much money there was.

"It weighs hundreds of pounds," said Old Dibs, very sly, and not wanting to name figgers.

We neither of us could very well blame the old gentleman for not wanting to trust us with a quarter of a million dollars while he was up a tree like a canary bird; and so Tom or I didn't say what was in our minds, which was to bury it somewheres. In fact, there was a longish silence, till I suggested using some two-inch iron pipe I had at home, instead of the light boat spars Tom had cut for the purpose.

"And as for the money," said I, "why not have a locker for it at each end, with the weight resting against the forks, and maybe a little room extra for Mr. Smith's toothbrush and toilet tackle?" I minded the size of the suit case I had last seen the stuff in, and showed Tom about what was wanted.

"But that'll cut him off at each end," objected Tom, looking at Old Dibs like he was measuring him for a coffin, "and you know yourself six foot six is the most we can allow."

"Oh, I don't mind shortening up a bit," said Old Dibs, laying down to show how easy it might be done, and eager to be accommodating.

"And I'd propose chicken wire instead of net," says I to Tom, noticing how the old gentleman bulked outboard. "He's putting a strain on that worse nor a live shark."

Tom said he thought so, too, and him and I put in half a day making the platform over, while Old Dibs crossed over to the graveyard and fluted away the rest of the afternoon. We waited for the full moon before getting it into the tree, for daytime was out of the question, and Tom and I managed it very well, and to both our satisfaction. The tropic moon is a whale of a moon, and you can almost see to read by it, and it wasn't the want of light that bothered us any. The trouble was more to get it level and lash it proper with zinc wire. But we finished it up in style, with a second coat of green paint everywhere except the bottom, and, though I do say it myself, it was as snug a little crow's nest, and as comfortable and strong, as though it had been made by people regularly in the business. We rigged the tackle, too, and tried out the Manila rope with the boatswain's chair, and would have sent up Old Dibs on a trial trip if we hadn't feared he'd never make another. So we let it go at that, he paying us one hundred dollars for our trouble, and expressing himself mighty well pleased.

I reckon perhaps he was, for we fixed up the attic, too, and had everything in train so that there wouldn't be no hitch when the time come. Tom got kind of sore waiting for it, for after having put so much work into the thing he naturally wanted to see it used, and it galled him to wait

and wait, with nothing doing. But Old Dibs took it more cheerful, and minded a good deal less about its being wasted; and as the months run on, he seemed to think he was out of the woods, and perked up wonderful.

Not that he wasn't careful, of course, or that Iosefo let down on the preaching; for nobody could be sure what day or what minute the pinch mightn't come. He grew quite familiar with the attic part of it, scooting up there whenever we raised a sail, and remaining for days at a time when a ship was in port. We had a fair number of them, off and on—the missionary bark, the *Equator*, Captain Reid; the *Lorelei*, Captain Saxe; the *Ransom*, Captain Mins; the *Belle Brandon*, Captain Cole; the brigantine *Trenton*, in ballast, calling in to set her rigging; the cutter *Ulysses*, with supplies for Washington Island, and the Seventh-Day Adventist schooner *Pitcairn*, with her mate dying of some kind of sickness. They buried him ashore, and then went out again, after giving us the precise date at which the world was coming to an end, and saying what a hell of a poor millennium it was going to be for anybody save *them*! Oh, yes, the usual straggle of vessels that happened our way, with months between; and, once, the smoke of a steamer on the horizon.

Perhaps a matter of eighteen months altogether since Old Dibs first landed, and day followed day,

like it might have gone on forever. One wouldn't have remarked any particular change in him, except that his rig was getting shabbier and the shine was coming off the stovepipe—and perhaps some improvement in the flute. This, an extra bulk, and a kind of contented look he hadn't wore before, was what life on the island had done for Old Dibs; and he branched out a bit in the line of household favorite, cutting kindling wood for Sarah, gutting fish, scraping cocoanut for the chickens; and the pair of them would sit and gossip for hours about the neighbors—how Taalolo had driven his wife out of doors, and the true inwardness of the king's quarrel with Ve'a, and why the Toto family was in ambush to cut off Tehea's nose. He could talk better native than I could, and he was made a pet of everywhere around the settlement, and there was seldom a pig killed but what they'd bring him the head out of respeck. Not that he wasn't as regular as ever at the graveyard; but he had kind of shook in, so to speak, and nobody gave a feast but what he sat at the right hand and divided honors with the pastor and the king.

One afternoon, from the bench, I heard them raise a cry of "*Pahi, Pahi,*" and I run out of the copra-shed, where I was weighing, to see a schooner heading in. She was a smart-looking little vessel of fifty or sixty tons, and she come

up hand over hand, making a running mooring off the settlement. Tom and I was waiting for her in a canoe, Old Dibs meanwhile climbing into the attic and dropping the trapdoor, with "Under Two Flags" and a lamp to support the tedium. That was getting to be routine now, and his last words were to buy all the books and papers we could lay our hands on, and not forget Sarah's list of stores she was out of. Bless my soul! he was always mindful of them things, and it was always *carte blanche* in the trade room for anything she fancied.

Well, we climbed aboard, and they told us she was the Sydney pilot boat *Minnie,* under charter to two gentlemen aboard who had an option on one of Arundel's guano islands. They had struck a leak in their main water tank, and were in for repairs and filling up fresh.

Tom and me got more of a welcome than seemed quite right, captains usually being shortish with traders till the gaskets are on; but in this case it was all so damn friendly that I nudged Tom and Tom nudged me. We all trooped below to have a drink in the cabin, and the two guano gentlemen were introduced to us, and likewise another they called their bookkeeper. All three of them were hulking big men, very breezy and well spoken, with more the manner of recruiting sergeants soft-sawdering you to enlist than the ways of people

high up in business. Mr. Phelps, who took the lead, did several things to make me chew on, and he shivered over his " h's " like he had been brought up originally without any. He was so genial, that if you had any money in your pocket you would have held on tight to it, and taken the first opportunity to get out. And his big hearty laugh was altogether too ready and his manners too free, and when he clapped me on the back I felt glad to think Old Dibs was tight in his attic, and his tree in good running order.

" Very little company hereabouts? " he asked, filling up our glasses for the second round.

" Nothing but us two," says Tom.

" My wife's father is somewhere down this way," volunteered Mr. Phelps.

" You don't say! " says I, nudging Tom again under the cuddy table.

" A fine old gent," went on Mr. Phelps, " but he met misfortunes in the produce commission business, and had to get out very quiet."

" Too bad! " said I.

" It grieves my wife not to know where he is," continued Mr. Phelps, " she being greatly attached to her father, and him disappearing like that; and she told me not to grudge the matter of fifty pounds to find him."

" There's a lot of room in the South Seas to lose a produce commission merchant in," says I.

"Here's a likeness of him," says Mr. Phelps, taking a photograph out of his pocket, while four pairs of eyes settled on Tom and me like gimlets, and there was the kind of pause when pins drop.

"A very fine-appearing old gentleman," says I, starting in spite of myself when I saw it was a picture of Old Dibs.

"Give us a squint, Bill," says Tom, taking it out of my hands as bold as brass. And then: "I've seen that face somewhere; I know I have. Lord bless me, wherever could it have been?" And he looked at it, puzzled and recollectful, me holding my breath, and the rest of them giving a little jump in their seats.

Tom brought his fist down on the table with a blow that made the glasses ring.

"It was on the *Belle Brandon*!" he cried out, very excited. "A stout old party, fair complected, who played the flute."

"That's him!" cried Phelps, half-starting from his chair.

"I reckon he must be up Jaluit way," said Tom coolly, "Captain Cole being bound for the Marshalls at the time."

I could feel them shooting glances all around us.

"It's remarkable your friend here doesn't remember him," says the one they called Nettleship, indicating me with the heel of his glass.

"I didn't happen to get aboard the *Brandon*,"

says I. "What was I doing, Tom? I disremember."

"That was when you was laid up with boils," says Tom, as ready as lightning.

"So it was," says I.

"You didn't happen to pass any talk with him?" asks Mr. Phelps of Tom.

"Nothing particular," says Tom.

"Even a little might help us," says Mr. Phelps. "See if you can't remember."

"Oh! he said he was looking for a quiet place to end his days in," answers Tom.

"I wonder that this here island wasn't to his taste," says Mr. Nettleship, with a quick look.

"Oh, it was," says Tom unabashed, "only Captain Cole broke in and said he knew a better."

By this time nearly all our heads were touching over the table, except the one they called the bookkeeper, who had run for a chart.

"Did he call the island by any particular name?" inquires Mr. Phelps.

"I think he said Pleasant Island," says Tom, "because I mind the old gentleman saying it must be a pleasant place with such a name and I said I had been there, but the holding ground was poor."

The bookkeeper laid the chart on the table, and the captain found Pleasant Island with his thumb.

He was about to say it was a ten days' run leeward, when he broke off sudden with "ouch"

instead, being kicked hard under the table, and pretending it was the beginning of a cough instead.

"I'm looking for a change of weather at the full of the moon," remarks Tom, "and you'd be wise to take this good spell while it lasts."

I guess Tom overdid it this time, and I gave him hell for it when we went ashore, for I saw the change on Phelps's face, and that he suddenly suspicioned Tom was playing double.

"Business comes first," he says, rolling up the chart, "and though I would like to find him, just for my poor wife's satisfaction, I can't go wild-goose-chasing all over the Pacific for a woman's whim."

Tom was beginning to feel that he had overdone it, too, and roused more suspicion than he had laid; so he thought to make it up by losing interest in Old Dibs, and what was Fitzsimmons doing now, and was it true that John L. had retired from the ring? But he didn't seem to recover the ground he had lost, and I judged it a bad sign when we went up the companion for Phelps to say, kind of absent-minded, that he'd go two hundred and fifty pounds for his father-in-law, alive or dead—raising it to five hundred as we dropped over the side.

We pulled first to Tom's house, so as to divert suspicion, and from there I went along by myself to tip off the news to Old Dibs. When I had given the knocks agreed on, three sets of four, he

drew back the trap, and asked very cheerful how I had made out with the books and papers.

"Good God, man, they're here!" says I.

"Who's here?" he asks, incredulous.

"A whole schooner of detectives from Sydney," says I. "They say they're buying guano islands, but there's already five hundred pounds out for you, dead or alive."

His great fat hand began to shake on the trap.

"Never you mind, Mr. Smith," I says reassuring. "Tom will be due here at midnight, and then we'll run you up your tree."

But that didn't seem to soothe him any, and he quavered out he would be better where he was. But I said they'd rummage the whole island upside down before they were done, and all he had to do was to lay low, not worry, and let me and Tom handle the thing for him.

He reached down his hand through the trap, and I shook it, he saying, "God bless you, Bill—God bless you!" And then it went shut, and I heard him blow out the lamp.

The next step was to take my old girl into the secret, she being a Tongan, as I've already said, and as true as steel. She didn't say much, but I guess it would have done Old Dibs good to have seen her eyes flash, and the way her teeth grit, and how quick she was to understand her part—which was, to pack his clothes in camphor-wood

chests under a top dressing of trade. Old Dibs made no bones about giving her the keys, while I took it on myself to tell Iosefo the enemy had arrived, and he'd better move about the village warning everybody of the fack. It was well I did so, for Phelps and Nettleship and the rest come ashore soon afterwards with their pockets full of trifles for the children and the girls, and they strolled about the settlement, stopping to rest and drink cocoanuts in the different houses. Phelps had brought the photograph along and showed it right and left, asking if they had ever seen anybody like that. I guess some of them would have cried out if it hadn't been for the pastor joining the party, like he wanted to do the honors of the island, telling the natives beforehand about the photograph, and shooing off the children when they come too close to it. The whites probably thought he was talking what nice folks they were, for he had a kind of bland missionary way of talking, though he was really calling them the sons of Belial, and saying how the person who gave Old Dibs away would have his house burned and go to hell.

The pastor did yeoman's service that day, and at sundown they all went back to their ship, very grumpy and dissatisfied, returning no wiser than when they'd come. Iosefo held a service afterwards to rub it in, and the king spoke at it, and

likewise the chiefs, and so in our different ways we all pulled together for the common good. They had quite a jollification that night on the schooner, singing songs and playing some kind of a hurdy-gurdy on deck, and the sound of it come over the water very pleasant to hear. I sneaked off in a canoe toward ten o'clock, to make sure it wasn't a blind, but there was no misdoubting what they were up to. They were all drunk, and getting drunker, and I couldn't but think what a poor, tipsifying set of sleuths they were, and how different from Sherlock Holmes in the book. I lay for nearly an hour under their quarter, to hear what I could hear, and all I got was the odds and ends of some smutty stories, and once being very near spit on the head.

When I got back to the station there was Tom to meet me, it being eleven now, and the village fast asleep. We overhauled the gear to make sure it was all in order, Sarah making up a basket of provisions for the old man, together with his tooth-brush, comb, panjammers, blanket, a demijohn of water, and a bottle of gin. She said he had eaten no dinner, groaning and carrying on awful, wanting her to shoot him with his pistol and end it all. But he seemed to have pulled himself together by the time we were ready, for he let himself down from the attic quite spry, and made us all laugh by the remarks he passed. But one could see he

just forced himself to do it, and his face looked powerful haggard and flabby in the lantern light, and he moved queer on his legs, like a push would have sent him over.

I had a little two-wheeled truck that I used about the store to run bags of shell about in, and copra, and on this we put the treasure, eight bags of it, each one as heavy as could be lifted comfortably. Old Dibs insisted on cutting one open and serving us out a double handful each, not forgetting a share for Tom's wife as well as mine, and saying, "Take it, and God bless you, my dear, kind friends!" We dropped it into my tool chest, and threw the key on the floor of the bedroom, meaning to divide up equal later on.

We rigged a sort of rope harness to the truck, giving Tom the handles to steer by, while Old Dibs, Sarah, and me did tandem in front. The boatswain's chair and the coil of Manila rope were lashed down on the load, as well as the basket of provisions, Sarah carrying the demijohn in her hand, Old Dibs the gin and "Under Two Flags," while I led the way with the lantern.

My, but we must have made a queer sight as we plowed through the darkness, Tom bearing down on the handles and fighting to keep the truck on an even keel, Old Dibs grampussing along as wheeler, and Sarah and me tugging like battery mules! Of course everybody knows that gold is

heavy, but when you run into the hundred thousands it becomes pig-iron heavy, cannon heavy, house-and-lot-and-barn heavy! It nearly pulled the hearts out of us to keep that truck moving, specially in the sand before we struck a harder going.

I thought time and again it was going to prove the death of Old Dibs. He was always laying down in his harness like a done-up Eskimo dog in the pictures, and having to be fanned alive again. But when we'd propose to cut him out, he'd say No, and stagger to his feet, showing a splendid spirit and cart-horsing ahead till his poor old breath came in roars.

It was a thankful moment when we got to the tree, where me and Tom, after a spell of rest, jumped in together with a will. It was no slouch of a job to get that tackle in position, the block being iron shod and heavy, the rope inch Manila, and the night as black as the pit of Tophet. Tom went aloft first, with a coil of light line, having to feel his way for the place we had marked with the handkerchief, and threatening more than once to come down quicker than he had gone up. The handkerchief had rotted off, or blown away long since, and it bothered Tom not a little to find where it had been. But at last he did so, dropping his line for the lantern, according to the plan we had arranged beforehand, so as to avoid all shouting and noise. When he had placed the lantern to his

satisfaction, the line came straggling down again for the block and the gear to make it fast with, and when this was done the inch Manila went up, and everything was ready.

It showed how well Tom and I had thought it out, that there wasn't a single hitch, except for the lantern blowing out and Tom having no matches, I going up to see what was delaying him, and having none neither. Then we changed places, Tom being a heavier man to pull, and I remaining aloft to handle the freight as it came along. They made the boatswain's chair fast below, and sent her up with the first load—two bags of coin—getting it on a level with the platform by the lantern marking the place. I stood on the platform and had no trouble in yanking the stuff in; and this went right along like a mail steamer, till it was all up, and it came old Dibs's turn.

But he just took one look at the boatswain's chair, and said "Nit," laying down on the ground when they tried to persuade him into it, and rolling over and over in desperation. We argufied over him for an hour, and it seemed all to no purpose, he refusing to budge an inch, saying he weighed two hundred and twenty pounds, and was better off in the attic.

Time was running away on us, and me and Tom got tired of saying the same things over and over, and always getting the same answers, and finally

we lost our tempers, and said we'd go home. Then he said he'd come home, too, and we said No, we had washed our hands of him. Then he said he was only a poor old man and would blow his brains out, and we said he might, if he wanted to. Then, when we had gone about twenty paces, he come lumbering after us, saying, "For God's sake, stop!" and swearing he would go up peaceful, and make no more trouble.

We tied him in like a baby in a high chair, I going up to receive him, while my wife and Tom laid on to the rope with a yeo-heave-yeo under their breaths. All the fight had clean gone out of him, and the only thing he did was to squeal a little when he bumped against the trunk, and tried to fill up with air to make himself lighter. But he reached the top all right, and I landed him very careful, he squatting down on the floor and saying, "Oh, my God!" I was too busy clearing away, and letting the block down to Tom, for me to hear much else he said, but when I was through and went to take a last look at him, he seemed quite snug and contented, and glad he had come. He shook hands very grateful, looking for me to come back the following night and report, I to make an owl signal like we had agreed on previously.

I wished him happy dreams, and come down, all three of us setting out for home with the truck and the gear, my wife in a tantrum at our having threat-

ened to desert Old Dibs when he acted so cowardly. Tom made it worse by saying the Kanakas were losing all respeck for whites, and if *he* was married to a Tongan, and was spoken to like that, he'd quit—by gum, that's what *he'd* do! Then she said it would serve me right if she went away in the schooner with the white men, and I would never see her again. And I said, "Oh, dear, but I'd feel sorry for the white man that got you!" Then she said she'd give all the gold Old Dibs had made her a present of to be back home in Tonga; and then I said I'd gladly add mine to hers. And when Tom added his, I thought we were in for a race war.

We all got back pretty cross and tired, but a little beer put heart in us; and I pulled her down on my knee and said she was the only girl in the world, and that I wouldn't trade her for a ten-ton cutter; while Tom counted out the money Old Dibs had given us previous, and said we were all a pack of fools, and that he was as fond of Sarah as anybody. So peace descended like a beautiful vision, and there was four hundred and forty dollars for each of us, with a twenty over that we tossed for, and engineered to let Sarah win. Tom said we might shake hands on a good night's work, and went home in high spirits, jingling his money in a bandanner.

It wasn't long after breakfast the next morning when I heard a great stamping and tramping out

in front, and there, if you please, was the whole schooner party, Phelps, Nettleship, the bookkeeper, and the captain. They had thrown off the mask now, and Phelps had a warrant a yard long for the apprehension of Runyon Rufe, which he read aloud to me, while the others listened with their hats off like it was church.

"I thought you gentlemen were in the guano business," says I, when he had finished.

"We're in the Runyon Rufe catching business," says Mr. Phelps, very genial, "and we trust you will not oppose the officers of the law in the exercise of their functions."

"I don't want to oppose anybody when it's four to one," says I, equally genial, "though may I make so bold as to inquire who is Runyon Rufe and what's he done?"

"Never heard of Runyon Rufe!" says Nettleship, like it was George Washington or Alfred the Great.

"Here it is, better than I can tell it," said Mr. Phelps, handing me a printed proclamation:

TEN THOUSAND POUNDS REWARD.

RUNYON RUFE, Banker and Company Promoter, wanted for gigantic frauds in connection with the Invincible Building Society, the Greater London Finance Syndicate, Suburbs Limited, and other undertakings. Fled to the United States, where he had previously put by sums aggregating two hundred thousand pounds; resisted extradition; forfeited his bail; was traced to Portland, Oregon, and thence

to Penrhyn Island, South Pacific, where all clews as to his whereabouts were lost.

Aged sixty-three; height, five feet nine inches; imposing appearance; weight, fifteen stone and over; fair complexion; brown eyes, with bushy, gray eyebrows; scanty gray hair; of a plethoric habit, and with a noticeable hesitancy of speech. When last seen was well supplied with money, and was heard declaring his intention of making his way toward the lesser-traveled islands of the Pacific Ocean.

The above reward, in whole or in part, will be paid by Houghton & Cust, No. 318 George Street, Sydney, New South Wales, on receiving information that will lead to the arrest of the said Runyon Rufe.

Traders and others are cautioned against harboring the fugitive, or aiding and abetting his escape from the officers of justice.

I read it three times and then handed it back.

"Show me where to sign," says I.

"We have to go through the disagreeable formality of searching these premises," said Mr. Phelps, disregarding my joke, "and if you have no objections we shall begin now!"

"And suppose I *did* have an objection?" I asked.

"We'd search them just the same," said Mr. Phelps, grinning.

I was in two minds what to do; but I noticed the bookkeeper's lip was cut, and there was dried blood on Mr. Nettleship's knuckles, and it didn't seem good enough. I saw they had begun on Tom first, and that decided me to take water with my formality.

"Walk in," says I.

They didn't wait for a second asking, and a minute later were poking and rummaging all through the place. They thought I might have hid him somewheres, and turned over everything to that end, not opening as much as a chest or pulling out a single drawer. It wasn't much pleasure to look on and see them doing it, but I had to take my medicine, and it was common sense to appear cheerful about it. They crawled into all kinds of places, and backed out of all kinds of others, and tapped the walls to see if any was hollow, and turned over sacks of pearl shell and copra, and sneezed and swore and burrowed and choked, till at last Mr. Phelps really found something, and that was a centipede that bit him. This brought them all out on the front veranda again, where I had to pretend I was sorry, which I was—for the centipede.

I asked what they were going to do next, and they said, "Get aboard and bathe it with ammoniar"; and I said, "No, I meant about Runyon Rufe"; and Mr. Phelps he give me a wicked look, and said that they'd lay him by the legs before long, together with a few white trading gentlemen, maybe, to keep him company; and I said, "Oh, dear, I hope that isn't any insinuation against present company!" and he said, "the present company might put the cap on if it fitted them"; and I said "if he couldn't keep a civil tongue in his

head he had better get off my front stoop"; and he said "he wouldn't demean himself by bandying words with a beach-comber," and went off sucking his hand, with the others crowding around him, and asking him how it felt now.

I suspicioned there had been a leak somewheres, and was surer than ever when Tom came around with his eye bunged up where Nettleship had hit him. And it certainly looked black that they made no appearance of moving, raising an awning over the quarter-deck, and bringing up tables and swinging hammocks like it was for a week. The pastor had told Tom that one of the children had reckonized Old Dibs's photograph, and clapped his hands before he could be stopped, crying out, "Ona! Ona!" the name Old Dibs went by among the Kanakas.

We put in a pretty anxious day, for they began a systematic prowl all over the island, obviously dividing out the territory and doing it simultaneous. That night they set a watch on my house and Tom's, the news coming in from Iosefo, who had spies out watching them. It was regular wheels within wheels, and I couldn't but wonder how poor Old Dibs was faring up his tree, waiting and waiting for us to come!

The next day they prowled harder than ever, this time the crew joining in, mate, cook, cabin boy, and four hands. Like was natural, they made

me and Tom's first—the crew, I mean—and we both had the same happy thought, square-face. The mate went off with only three drinks in him, taking the cabin boy with two, but the rest of them sucked it in by the bucket, and the fartherest any of them got away was a hundred yards, and him with a bottle in his hand. They were a pretty ugly crowd by nightfall, refusing to go back to the ship when ordered, and roaring and yelling about the settlement to all hours. The afterguard still kept tab on me and Tom, however, and so yet another night passed without our daring to make our date with Old Dibs. But in the morning they lost all patience, rounding up the crew with handspikes, and all going off to the schooner with half of them in irons. Phelps and Nettleship helped to get up anchor themselves, and toward nine o'clock we had the blessed sight of their heels, beating out of the lagoon against a stiff trade.

It was hard to have to wait the balance of the day doing nothing, for we might need the tree idea again, and it would have been a mug's game to have given away the secret to the Kanakas. Tom and me both felt considerable rocky, besides, from having drunk so much gin with the schooner's people; for though we had held back all we could, and had tipped our glasses on the sly, we couldn't seem too behindhand in whooping it up with them. But we were dead dogs now all right, and the main

part of breakfast and dinner was the buckets of water we poured over each other's heads. It was what you might call a very long day, and it seemed like the sun would never set, for we were both of us in a sweat about Old Dibs, and more than anxious how he had made out.

Then sundown came, and dusk, and night itself, and still another long spell for the Kanakas to go to sleep, which it seemed as though they never would. Yes, a long day, and a long, long evening, and it was like a whole week had passed before we stood under the tree and owly-owled to Old Dibs.

It was a mighty faint answer he gave back, and when me and Tom had rigged up the chair again we found we had a sick man on our hands. The exposure had nearly done for him; that, and the fear of being caught, and all the water having leaked out of the demijohn, which he had stood on its side the better to hide it. He was that weak he could hardly sit up, and was partly off his nut, besides, wanting to telephone at once to Longhurst, and mixing up Tom with the Public Prosecutor.

He would put his poor old trembling hand across his forehead like he was trying to wipe all this away, saying, "Is that you, Tom Riley?" and, "Bill, Bill," like that. It was no easy matter to get him down, for he almost needed to be lifted into the boatswain's chair, and couldn't as much as

raise a little finger to help himself or hold on, and once we nearly spilled him out altogether. Fortunately, my old girl had brought some hot coffee in a beer bottle, and this was just like pouring new life down his throat. Our first business was to get him home and tuck him in, returning and making a second trip of the treasure, and winding up all serene about two in the morning, with Old Dibs sitting up in bed and eating fried eggs.

When Iosefo reported next morning, Old Dibs paid him a hundred dollars and dispensed with his services, saying that though he'd always be glad to see him around as a friend, he had no more call to keep him sitting on the chest. This made Tom and me feel good, for it showed he trusted us now, which he had never quite done before. In a day or two he was almost as lively as ever, out in the graveyard playing on his flute, and attending to church work on committee nights the same as before.

But there was a big change in him for all that, and me and Tom got it into our heads that he wasn't going to live very long, for he had that distressed look on his face that showed something wrong inside. He used to run on talking to himself half the night, and once he burst in to where I was asleep, saying he had seen me at the treasure chest, prizing off the lid, and what did I mean by it? After having lived together so long and com-

fortable, it wasn't very pleasant to see him going crazy on us—and going crazy that way—being suspicious we meant to rob and kill him, and all of us being in a conspiracy. He told the pastor he was afraid of his life of Tom and me, and if it wasn't for Iosefo he would be fearful to stay in my house a minute; and he told Tom *he* was the only friend he had; and then said the same to me, warning me against Tom and Iosefo, saying they were at the winder every night trying to break in. And all this, maybe, on the very selfsame day, the three of us comparing notes and wondering where it was all going to end.

It ended sooner than any of us expected; for one morning, when Sarah went to take him his coffee, his door was locked, and for all our hammering we couldn't raise a sound. I broke it in at last, expecting that he'd rise up and shoot me, and dodging when it went inward with a crash. But there was nobody to shoot, the room being stark empty, and the only thing of Old Dibs his clothes on a chair. We were at a loss what to do, and waited for half an hour, thinking he might turn up. Then, real uneasy in our minds, we went out to look for him. He wasn't anywhere near the house or the beach, and as a last resort we went across the island to the graveyard, thinking perhaps he had taken it into his head to have a before-breakfast tootle on the flute. We found him, sure enough, in the

middle of the graveyard, but laying forward in his old crimson dressing gown, dead.

Yes, sir, cold to the touch like it had been for hours, and holding a blackened lantern in his poor old fist—dead as dead—face down in the coral sand. We rolled him over to do what we could for him, but he had passed to a place beyond help or hurt. I went back for Tom in a protuberation, saying, "My God! Tom, what do you think's happened—Old Dibs's dead in the graveyard!" I guess the old man had never been so close to Tom as he had been to me, boarding in my house and almost a father to me and the wife, for Tom took it awful cool, and asked almost the first thing about the money.

"You and me will divide on that," he says.

"Sure," I says, "but that can stand over till afterwards, Tom."

"Stand over, nothing!" he says, very sharp; and with that we both set off running for my house.

It was a jumpy thing to enter that darkened room, with the feeling you couldn't shake off that Old Dibs was peering in at us, and that every minute we'd hear his footstep, everything laid out just as he had last touched them, and almost warm, even to his slippers and his collar and the old hat against the wall. But it made no more difference to Tom than if it had been his own hat, and he

tramped in like a policeman, saying, "Where is it, Bill?"

"In one of them two camphor-wood chests," says I.

He lifted up one of them by the end and let it fall ker-bang!

"Not here," says he.

"Try the other," says I, with a sudden sinking.

He let that crash, too, and turning around, looked me in the face.

"Good God, Tom!" said I.

"Just what I suspected all along," said Tom, as savage as a tiger. "He's made way with it!"

We didn't stop to speak another word, but rummaged the whole room upside down.

"He's buried it," says Tom, savager than ever, "and what kind of a bastard was you to let him?"

"It was none of my business," says I.

"None of your business!" he repeated, screaming out at me like a woman—"to have a quarter of a million by the tail and let it go? You might have been slack about your own half, but it was a swine's trick not to keep track of mine!"

"He can't have taken it very far," I said.

"Not far!" yelled Tom, making an insult of every word I said. "Why, what was to prevent him lugging away a little this day and that, till the whole caboodle was sunk in a solid block? What do you suppose he was doing with the lan-

tern, you tom-fool? Planting it, of course—planting every dollar of it, night after night, while you were snoozing in your silly bed."

"If it's anywhere it's in the Kanaka graveyard," says I. "I'll go bail it's within ten feet of where we found his dead body."

"Did you stake the place?" says Tom.

I was ashamed to tell him I hadn't even thought of the money, being struck all of a heap, and always powerful fond of Old Dibs.

"It would serve you right if I made you dig up the whole graveyard, single-handed," said Tom; "and if you had a spark of proper feeling, Bill Hargus, you'd fall on your knees and beg my parding for having acted like such a damned ninny!"

I would have answered him back in his own coin if I hadn't felt so bad about it all, and rattled, besides. I had punched Tom's head often and often, and he had punched mine; but I was staggered by the money being missing, and the loss of it just seemed to swallow up everything else. Somehow, it had never seemed *my* money till then, and the more I felt it mine the more galling it was to give it up. Tom relented when he saw how cut up I was, withdrawing all the hard things he had said, and going on the other tack to cheer me up. He said he was just as big an ass as I was, and came out handsome about its being both our fault,

and how it didn't matter a hill of beans anyway, for we'd soon get our spades on to it. It stood to reason it couldn't be far away or buried very deep, and a little fossicking with an iron ramrod would feel it out in no time.

Well, we gave Old Dibs a good send off, Tom and me making the coffin, and we buried him in a likely place to windward of the Kanaka graveyard. Tom wouldn't have him *inside,* for fear the natives might chance on the treasure themselves, and we put a neat fence around the place, with a priming and two coats of white paint, and a natty gate to go in by with brass hinges. The whole settlement turned out, Iosefo outdoing himself, and the king butting in with an address, and everything shipshape and Bristol fashion, as sailors say. We didn't have no flowers, and the whole business was sort of home-made and amateur, but Sarah made up for the lack of them by pegging out the grave with little poles, and streamers which gave quite a gay look to it, and fluttered in the wind, very pretty to see.

Then Tom and me started in our digging operations on a checkerboard plan, very systematic, with stakes where we left off, working by night so as not to rouse the natives' ill will. Or, I ought to have said, two nights, for I guess we didn't cover up our tracks sufficient, and they got on to it. We discovered this in the form of a depitation of chiefs

and elders, who give us warning it had to stop ker-plunk! They said they wouldn't allow their graveyard torn up, and altogether acted very ugly and insulting. Tom and I had to sing small and put in a holiday neither of us wanted, for the Kanakas had the whip hand of us, and I never saw them so roused. Tom at first tried to carry it off with a high hand, informing them that he was a British subjeck, by God! and was they meaning to interfere with a British subjeck? But I couldn't see how that gave him any right to dig up Kanaka graveyards for money that didn't belong to him, and so I smoothed them down and out-talked Tom, saying it shouldn't happen again, and I was glad they had mentioned it!

We waited a few weeks for the storm to blow over, and then begun again, this time more cautious than before by a darned sight. We thought we were managing beautifully, till the next day, when we went out fishing in Tom's boat and come back to find both our stations burned to the ground, and all our stuff stacked outside the smoking ruins, higgledy-piggledy!

This was getting it in the neck, and we saw we were beat. We ran up a couple of little shacks and settled down to ordinary trading again, with what good spirits you can imagine. We didn't even dare walk on the weather side of the island, lest they'd carry out their next threat, which was to

shoot us; and the only revenge we had was raising prices on them and monkeying with the scales, winning out in both ways. But it was a poor set off to a quarter of a million of cold coin where almost we could lay our hands on it, and if there was in the whole world a human being more blue and miserable than me, it was Tom Riley. Then, to make matters worse, the whole thing was common property now, the Kanakas knowing as much as we did, and more, and the news was passed along to every ship that came—all about Old Dibs and the money in the graveyard. You might be surprised the natives didn't take a leaf out of our book and dig it up for themselves; but you'll never really civilize a Kanaka if you try a thousand years, and they wouldn't have turned up their dead grandmothers and fathers and aunts for all the gold in the Bank of England—being sunk in superstition and slavishly afraid of spirits and the like.

We had to sit with folded hands and pretend to be pleased, while every ship that called had to take its whack at the graveyard. First it was the *Lorelei,* getting off scot free with only a taboo; then it was the *Tasmanian,* with a bullet through the captain's leg; then the cutter *Sprite,* with concussion of the brain. I never saw the Kanakas drove so wild, till at last, when there was a ship off the settlement, they'd set an anchor watch on the graveyard and do sentry go with loaded guns.

Then one fine day a French schooner from Tahiti ran in, unloaded sixteen men armed with rifles and carrying pickaxes and spades, who marched across the island singing the "Marseillaise," and proceeded to take up the whole place. The natives rallied with everything they could lay their hands on, from Winchesters to fish spears, and my, if they didn't chase out them Frenchmen at the double! They got away, leaving one dead and carrying three, making a bee line for the beach, the schooner covering their retreat with a blazing Nordenfeldt. They were in such a hurry to be gone that they cut away their moorings with an ax, and I had the privilege, later on, of buying their anchor, second hand, for ten dollars in trade.

The natives got wilder than ever after this, and were almost afraid to die, lest they'd be dug up again and their bones cast to the winds. From being the most orderly island in the Pacific, Manihiki slumped to be the worst; and it got such a name that ships were scared of coming near it; and once, when Tom and me went out in a whaleboat toward a becalmed German bark, hoping to raise a newspaper or a sack of potatoes, they opened fire on us and lowered two boats to tow away the ship. Tom and me got mixed up in the general opinion of the place, which was stinking bad and what they called a pirates' nest, and an English man-of-war came down special to deport Tom. I

never was so glad in my life to be an American, for, though the captain gave Tom what he called the benefit of the doubt, they fined him two hundred and fifty dollars and slanged him like a nigger.

The last straw was the visit of a French man-of-war, that opened broadsides on us without warning, and then landed and burned the settlement, including everything me and Tom owned in the world, except the clothes we stood in and the cash we snatched on the run. This was on account of the "outrage" on the Tahiti schooner.

Tom said the island was becoming a regular human pigeon-shoot, and wondered where the lightning would strike next; and we both grew clean sick of it and in a fever to get away. There was not even the temptation of Old Dibs's treasure to keep us now, for the natives all got together and heaped up the graveyard solid with rock to the level of the outside walls, and floored the top with cement six inches deep, putting in a matter of a thousand tons. It was as solid as a fortification, and pounded down, besides, with pounders, like a city street; and if ever there was money in a safe place and likely to stay there undisturbed, I guess it was Old Dibs's.

It was a happy day for Tom and me when the *Flink* dropped anchor off the settlement, and we patched it up with the captain to give us a passage to the Kingsmills, to begin the world again. It

had always lain sort of heavy on my wife that we hadn't put up a name over old Dibs's grave, and now that we were going away with that undone she reproached me awful. You see, I had promised her something nice in the marble line from Sydney, and kept putting her off and off in the hope she'd forget it. She had been remarkably fond of the old fellow, as, indeed, so was I, and she said it was a shame to go away forever with this unattended to. I didn't have no time for anything fancy, nor the ability neither, but as the ship lay over for a couple of days I made shift to please her with a wooden slab. We went over and set it up about an hour before we sailed, and for all I know it may be there yet. Some folks might kick at the inscription, but he had always been mighty good and kind and free-handed to us, and you must take a man as you find him. This was how it run:

SACRED
TO
THE MEMORY
OF
RUNYON RUFE
BANKER AND PHILANTHROPIST
ERECTED
BY
HIS SORROWING FRIENDS

THE LABOR CAPTAIN

It was a wild March day, and the rising wind sang in the rigging of the ships. The weather horizon, dark and brilliant, in ominous alternations showed a sky of piled-up cloud interspersed with inky patches where squalls were bursting. To leeward, the broad lagoon, stretching for a dozen miles to the tree-topped rim of reef, smoked with the haze of an impending gale. Ashore, the palms bent like grass in the succeeding gusts, and the ocean beaches reverberated with a furious surf. The great atoll of Makin, no higher than a man, no wider than a couple of furlongs, but in circumference a sinuous giant of ninety miles or more, lay like a snake on the boisterous waters of the equator and defied the sea and storm.

Within the lagoon, and not far off the settlement, two ships rocked at anchor. One, the *Northern Light,* was a powerful topsail schooner of a hundred tons; straight bowed, low in the water, built on fine lines and yet sparred for safety, the sort of vessel that does well under plain sail, and when pressed can fly. The other, the *Edelweiss,* was a miniature fore and after of about twenty tons, a toy of delicacy and grace, betraying at a glance

that she had been designed a yacht, and, in spite of fallen fortunes, was still sailed as one. The man that laid her lee rail under would get danger as well as speed for his pains, and in time would be likely to satisfy a taste for both by making a swift trip to the bottom.

The deck of the *Northern Light* was empty save for the single tall figure of Gregory Cole, captain and owner, who was leaning over the rail gazing at the *Edelweiss*. He was a man of about thirty, his tanned, handsome face overcast and somber, his eyes, with their characteristic hunted look, fixed in an uneasy stare on his smaller neighbor.

He had never known how passionately he had loved Madge Blanchard until he had lost her; until after that wild quarrel on Nonootch, when her father had called him a slaver to his face, and they had parted on either side in anger; until he had beaten up from westward to find her the month-old wife of Joe Horble. Somehow, in the course of those long, miserable months, he had never thought of her marrying; he felt so confident of that fierce love she had so often confessed for him; he had come back repentant, ashamed of the burning offense he had then taken, determined to let bygones be bygones, and to begin, if need be, a new and a more blameless way of life. It was natural for the girl to side with her father; to resent her lover's violence and temper; to show a face as cold

as his own when he said he would up anchor and to sea. Fool that he had been to keep his word! fool that he had been to tear his heart to pieces out of pride! fool that he had been to let it stand between him and the woman he loved! His pride! with Madge now in Joe Horble's arms!

He cursed the fate that had brought him into the same lagoon with the *Edelweiss*; that had laid his ship side by side with Joe's dainty schooner; that shamed and mocked him with the unceasing thought that Madge—his Madge—was aboard of her. He paced up and down the quarter-deck. He had more than a mind to get to sea, but the gloom to windward daunted him, and he ordered out the kedge instead and bade the mate strip the awnings off her. By Jove! if things grew blacker he'd house his topmasts. Then he looked again at the little *Edelweiss,* and tried to keep back the thought of Horble sitting there below with Madge.

He had to see her. He was mad to see her. The thought of her tortured and tempted him without end. Suppose she, too, had learned that love is stronger than oneself; that the mouth can say Yes when the heart within is breaking; that she, like himself, had found the time to repent her folly? Was he the man to leave her thus; to acquiesce tamely in a decision that was doubtless already abhorrent to her; to remain with unlifted hand when she might be on fire for the sign to

come to him? No, by God! he'd beg her forgiveness and offer her the choice. Yes or No! It was for her to choose.

He jumped into the dinghy and pulled over to the schooner. Small at a distance, she seemed to shrink as he drew near her, so that when he stood up he was surprised to find his head above the rail. So this was Horble, this coarse, red-faced trader, with the pug nose, the fat hands, the faded blue eyes that met his own so sourly!

"Captain Horble?" said Gregory Cole.

"Glad to see you aboard," said Horble.

They shook hands and sat side by side on the rail.

"Where's Madge?" said Gregory.

"Mrs. Horble's ashore," said the captain.

"I'm afraid I can never call her anything but Madge," said Gregory, detecting the covert reproach in the other's voice.

Horble was plainly ill at ease. His face turned a deeper red. He was on the edge of blurting out a disagreeable remark, and then hesitated, making an inarticulate sound in his throat. Like everybody else, he was afraid of the labor captain.

"Crew's ashore, too," said Gregory, glancing about the empty deck.

"There ain't no crew," muttered Horble.

"Thunder!" cried Gregory. "Do you do it with electricity, or what?"

"Me and Madge runs her," returned Horble.

"Do you mean to say she pully-hauls your damn ropes?" exclaimed Gregory.

"Yes," said Horble. "What's twenty tons between the two of us?"

"And cooks?" said Gregory.

"And cooks," said Horble.

"You don't believe in lapping your wife in luxury!" exclaimed Gregory.

"Madge and I talked it over," said Horble. "I was for trading ashore, but her heart was set on the schooner. I can make twice the money this way and please her in the bargain."

"I know she can sail a boat against anybody," said Gregory, wincing at the remark.

Horble spat in the water and said nothing. His fat, broad back said, plainer than words: "You're an intruder! Get out!"

"I believe she's aboard this very minute," said Gregory with a strange smile.

"She's ashore, I tell you," said Horble sullenly.

"I'll just run below and make sure," said Gregory.

He slipped down the little companion way, looked about the empty cabin and peered into the semi-darkness of the only stateroom.

"Madge!" he cried. "Madge!"

Horble had not lied to him. There was not a soul below. But on the cabin table he saw Madge's

sewing machine and a half-made dress of cotton print. She had always been fond of books, and there, in the corner, was her little bookcase, taken bodily from her old home in Nonootch. Scattered about here and there were other things that brought her memory painfully back to him; that hurt him with their familiarity; that caused him to lift them up and hold them with a sort of despairing wonder: her guitar, her worn, lock-fast desk; the old gilt photograph album he remembered so well. He sat down at the table and buried his face in his hands. What a fool he had been! What a fool he had been!

He was roused by the sound of Horble's footsteps down the ladder. With his head leaning on his hand, he looked at the big naked feet feeling for the steps, then at the uncouth clothes as they gradually appeared, then at the fat, weak, frightened face of the man himself. He grew sick at the sight of him. Would Horble strike him? Would Horble have the grit to order him off the ship? No; the infernal coward was getting out the gin—a bottle of square-face and two glasses.

"Say when," said Horble.

"When," said Gregory.

Horble tipped the bottle into his own glass. A second mate's grog! One could see what the fellow drank.

"Here's luck," said Gregory.

"Drink hearty," said Horble.

"Joe Horble," said Gregory, leaning both elbows on the table, "there's something you ought to know: I love Madge, and Madge loves me!"

Horble gasped.

"She's mine!" said Gregory.

Horble helped himself to some more gin, and then slowly wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

"You're forgetting she's my wife," he said.

"I'll give you a thousand pounds for her, cash and bills," said Gregory.

"You can't sell white women," said Horble. "She ain't labor."

"A thousand pounds!" repeated Gregory.

"I won't sell my wife to no man," said Horble.

The pair looked at each other. Horble's hand felt for the gin again. His speech had grown a little thick. He was angry and flustered, and a dull resentment was mantling his heavy face.

"I'll go the schooner," cried Gregory. "The *Northern Light* as she lies there this minute, not a dollar owing on her bottom, with two hundred pounds of specie in her safe. Lock, stock, and barrel, she's yours!"

Horble shook his head.

"Madge ain't for sale," he said.

"Please yourself," said Gregory. "You'll end by losing her for nothing."

"Captain Cole," said Horble, "Madge has told me how near it was a go between you and her, and how, if you hadn't cleared out so sudden the way you did, she would have married you in spite of old Blanchard. But when you went away like that you left the field clear, and you mustn't bear me no malice for having stepped in and taken your leavings. What's done's done, and it's a sorry game to come back too late and insult a man who never did you no harm."

"Oh!" said Gregory.

"If you choose," continued Horble in his tone of wounded reasonableness, "you can make a power of mischief between me and Madge. I don't think it comes very well from you to do it; I don't think anything that calls himself a man would do it; least of all a genelman like yourself, whom we all respeck and look up to. Captain Cole, if you've lost Madge, you know you can only blame yourself."

"I don't call her lost," said Gregory.

"Captain Cole," said Horble, calmly but with a quiver of his lip, "we'll take another drink and then we'll say good-by."

"I'm not going till I see Madge," said Gregory.

Horble began to tremble.

"It's for Madge to decide," added Gregory.

"Decide what?" demanded Horble in a husky stutter.

"Between you and me, old fellow," said Gregory.

"And you've the gall to say that on my ship, at my table, about my wife!" exclaimed Horble, punctuating the sentence with the possessive.

"Yes," said Gregory.

Horble sat awhile silent. He was obviously turning the matter over in his head. He said at last he would go on deck and take another look to windward.

"There's a power of dirt to windward!" he said.

Gregory, left to himself, edged closer against the bulkhead. He felt that something was about to happen, and he was in the sort of humor to never mind what. It did not even worry him to think he was unarmed.

The companion way darkened with Horble's body, and the big naked feet again floundered for the steps. As they deliberately descended, Gregory changed his place, taking the corner by the lazarette door, where, at any rate, he could only be attacked in front. Horble's face plainly showed discomfiture at this move, and his right hand went hurriedly behind his back. Gregory was conscious of a belaying pin being whipped out of sight, and in an instant he was roused and tense, his nostrils vibrating with a sense of danger. The two men stared at each other, and then Horble backed into the stateroom, remarking with furtive

insincerity, "There's a power of dirt to windward!" This said, the door went shut behind him. Gregory sprang to his feet and burst it open with his powerful shoulders, crushing Horble against the bunk, who, pistol in hand, fired at him point blank. The bullet went wide, and there was a sound of shattering glass. Gregory's hands clenched themselves on Horble's, and the revolver twisted this way and that under the double grasp. Horble was panting like a steam engine; his lower jaw hung open, and he cried as he fought, the tears streaking his red face; there was an agonized light in his eyes, for his forefinger was breaking in the trigger guard. A hair's breadth more and he could have driven a bullet through his opponent's body; a twist the other way—and he moaned and ground his teeth and frenziedly strove to regain what he had lost. Suddenly he let go, snatched his left hand clear, and throttled Gregory against the wall. Gregory, suffocating, his eyes starting from their sockets, his mouth dribbling blood and froth, struggled with supreme desperation for the pistol. Getting it in the very nick of time, and eluding Horble's right hand, he fired twice through the armpit down.

Horble sank at the first shot, and received the second kneeling. Then he toppled backward, and lay in a twitching heap against the drawers below the bunk, groaning and coughing. Gregory, with

averted face, gave him another shot behind the ear, and another through the mouth, and then went out, sick and faint, shutting the stateroom door behind him. He sat for a long time beside the table, absolutely spent, and still holding the revolver in his hand. He was shaking in a chill, though the temperature was over eighty, and the cabin, when he had first entered it, had seemed to him overpoweringly hot and stifling. He warmed himself with a nip of gin. He looked over his clothes for a trace of blood, and was thankful to find none. He took off his coat; he examined the soles of his shoes. No blood! Thank God, no blood!

He went on deck and cast the revolver overboard, standing at the taffrail and watching it sink. Even in the time he had been below the wind had risen; it was blowing great guns to seaward, and the lagoon itself was white and broken as far as the eye could reach. Aboard his own schooner they were busy housing the topmasts, and the yeo-heave-yeo of straining voices warned him that Cracroft was hoisting in the boats and making everything snug.

Gregory leaned against the wheel and tried to think. To throw Horble's body overboard would be to accomplish nothing. The blood, the shot holes, the disordered cabin, would all betray him. To scuttle the schooner with a stick of dynamite was a better plan, but that involved returning to

the *Northern Light,* with the possibility of Madge coming off in the interval and discovering the murder for herself. No, the risk of that appalled him. Besides, whatever happened, he had another reason for keeping the truth from Madge. The fact of Horble's death, even if she thought it accidental, would shock her to the core. It was inconceivable that she would feel anything but horror stricken, whether she judged her former lover innocent or not. She might even undergo a terrible remorse. At such a moment how little likely she would be to give way to him! Of course she would refuse. Any woman would refuse. Every restraining influence would be massed against him. No, his only hope lay in getting her aboard his schooner and out of the lagoon before the least suspicion could dawn upon her. Once away, and it might be two years before she might even hear of Horble's death. Once away, and the empty seas would keep his secret. Once away——

He studied the weather with a new and consuming anxiety. How could he manage to get out at all, or pick a course through the middle channel! It was thick with coral rocks, and in a day so overcast the keenest eye aloft would be at fault. And outside, what then? By God! it was working up to a hurricane. To run before it would be courting death. Hove to, he would be cramped for room, with three big islands on his lee. In his

lawless and desperate past he had taken many a fall with fortune; he was accustomed to weigh the danger of perilous alternatives; he knew what it was to hazard everything on his own vigilance and skill, and to bear with a sailor's fatalism the throw of those dread dice on which his own life had been so often staked. But to stake Madge's life! Madge, whom he loved so dearly! Madge, for whom he would have died! And yet there was something sublime in the thought of taking her in his arms and driving before the gale, the storm sails treble reefed on the bending yards, the decks awash from end to end, Madge beside him, the pitchy night in front, the engulfing seas behind; to swim or sink, to ride or smother, accepting their fate together, and, if need be, drowning at the last in each other's arms.

He looked toward the settlement and saw a crowd of natives pushing a whaleboat into the water; looked again, and saw old Maka taking his place in the stern sheets and assisting a woman in beside him. The woman! It needed no second glance to tell him it was Madge. He had never counted on her coming off in company. Fool that he was, he had taken it for granted that she would be alone. Everything, in fact, turned on her being alone. Then, with a start, he remembered his own dinghy, and how it would be tray him. He had made it fast on the schooner's starboard quarter,

near the little accommodation ladder. Going on his hands and knees, lest his head should be seen above the shallow rail, he unloosed the painter, worked the boat astern, and drew it in again to port. Then he crouched down in the alleyway and waited.

A few minutes later and the whaler was bumping against the schooner's side. It might have been bumping against Gregory's heart, so agonizing was the suspense as he lay breathless and cramped between the coffinlike width of house and rail.

"It was kind of you to bring me off, Maka," said Madge.

The old Hawaiian laughed musically in denial. "No, no!" he cried.

"You must come below and see the captain," said Madge.

Gregory was in a cold sweat of apprehension.

"Too much storm," said Maka doubtfully. "I go home now, and put rocks on the church roof."

"Five minutes won't matter," said Madge.

Again Gregory trembled.

"More better I go home quick," said Maka. "No rocks, no roof!"

The boat shoved off, the crew striking up a song. Madge seemed to remain standing at the gangway where they had left her. Gregory felt by instinct that she was gazing at the *Northern Light*, and that as she gazed she sighed; that she was lost in reverie and was loath to go below.

He rose stiffly from his hiding place. Even as he did so it came over him that he was extraordinarily tired—so tired that he swayed as he stood and looked at her.

"Madge!" he said in almost a whisper. "Madge!"

She turned instantly, paling as she saw who confronted her.

"Greg!" she cried.

For a moment they stared at each other speechless. Then he leaped on the house and ran to her, she shrinking back from him as he tried to take her hands.

"You must not!" she cried, as he would have kissed her. "Greg, you must not! I'm married. It's all different now."

He tried to put his arms around her, but she pushed him fiercely back. Her eyes were flashing, and her bosom rose and fell.

"I'm Joe's wife," she said.

Then, from his face, she seemed to divine something.

"What have you done to Joe?" she cried. She would have passed him, but he stopped her.

"No, no!" he protested.

"Let me go, or I shall call him," she broke out. "You sha'n't insult me! You sha'n't kiss me!"

He was kissing her even as he held her back,

even as she fought and struggled with him—on the lips, on the neck, on her black, loosened hair, now tangling and flying in the wind. He was so weak that she soon got the better of him—so weak and dizzy that he did not guard himself as she struck him on the mouth with her little doubled-up fist.

He put his hand to his lip and found it bleeding. He showed her what she had done. She drew back, and regarded him with mingled pity and exultation.

"Now will you let me go?" she cried.

"Madge," he returned, "Joe's drunk in his berth. I made him drunk, Madge. I had to talk to you alone, and there was no other way."

She was stung to the quick. Her husband's shame was hers, and it was somehow plain that Horble had been at fault before. She never thought to doubt Greg's word, though his callousness revolted her.

"What is it you want to say?" she said at last in an altered voice.

"To ask you to forgive me."

"For what? for taking advantage of Joe's one failing?"

"No; for leaving you the way I did."

"I'll never do that, Greg—never, never, never!"

"Your father——"

"Don't try and blame my father, Greg."

"I blame only myself."

"Why have you come back to torture me?" she exclaimed. "You said it was forever. You cast me off, when I cried, and tried to keep you. You said I'd never see you again."

"I was a fool, Madge."

"Then accept the consequences, and leave me alone."

"And if I can't——"

She looked him squarely in the eyes. "I am Joe's wife," she said.

"Madge," he said, "I am not trying to defend myself. I'm throwing myself on your mercy. I'm begging you, on my knees, for what I threw away. I——"

"You've broken my heart," she said; "why should I mind if you break yours?"

"Madge," he cried, "in ten minutes we can be aboard the *Northern Light* and under weigh; in an hour we can be outside the reef; in two, and this cursed island will sink forever behind us, and no one here will ever see us again or know whither we have gone. Let us follow the gale, and push into new seas, among new people—Tahiti, Marquesas, the Pearl Islands—where we shall win back our lost happiness, and find our love only the stronger for what we've suffered."

She pointed to the windward sky. "I think I know the port we'd make," she said.

"Then make it," he cried, "and go down to it in each other's arms."

For a moment she looked at him in a sort of exaltation. She seemed to hesitate no longer. Her hot hands reached for his, and he felt in her quick and tumultuous breath the first token of her surrender. Herself a child of the sea, brought up from infancy among boats and ships, her hand as true on the tiller, her sparkling eyes as keen to watch the luff of a sail as any man's, she knew as well as Gregory the hell that awaited them outside. To accept so terrible an ordeal seemed like a purification of her dishonor. If she died, she would die unstained; if she lived, it would be after such a bridal that would obliterate her tie to the sot below. Then, on the eve of her giving way, as every line in her body showed her longing, as her head drooped as though to find a resting place on the breast of the man she loved, she suddenly called up all her resolution and tore herself free.

"I'm Joe's wife!" she said.

Gregory faltered as he tried again to plead with her; but in his mind's eye he saw that stiffening corpse below, lying stark and bloody on the cabin floor.

"You gave me to him," she burst out. "I'm his, Greg. I will not betray my husband for any man."

Again he besought her to go with him. But the moment of her madness had passed. She listened unmoved, and when at last he stopped in despair, she bade him take his boat and go.

He sat down on the rail instead, his eyes defying her.

She stepped aft, and his heart stood still as she seemed on the point of descending the companion. But she had another purpose in mind. Throwing aside the gaskets, she stripped the sail covers off the mainsail and began, with practiced hands, to reef down to the third reef. Then she went forward and did the same to the forestaysail. A minute later, hardly knowing why or how, except that he was helping Madge, Gregory, like a man in a dream, was pulling with her on the halyards of both sails. The wind thundered in them as they rose; the main boom jerked violently at the sheet and lashed to and fro the width of the deck; the anchor chain fretted and sawed in the hawse hole; the whole schooner strained and creaked and shook to the keelson. Gregory, in amazement, asked Madge what she was doing.

"Going to sea, Greg," she said.

"Alone? he cried. "Alone?"

"Joe and I," she said.

It was on his tongue to tell her Joe was dead; but, though he tried, he could not do so. It wasn't in flesh and blood to tell her he had killed her

husband. He could only look at her helplessly, and say over and over again, "To sea!"

"Greg," she said, "I mean to leave you while I am brave—while I am yet able to resist—while I can still remember I am Joe's wife!"

"And drown," he said.

"What do I care if I do?" she returned. "What do I care for anything?"

"If it's to be one or the other," he said, "I'll go myself. With my big schooner I'd have twice the chance you'd have."

She put her arms round his neck and kissed him. "You sweet traitor," she said, "you'd play me false!"

He protested vehemently that he would not deceive her.

"Besides," she said, "I could risk myself, but I couldn't bear to risk you, Greg."

He tried a last shot. The words almost strangled in his throat.

"And Joe?" he said. "Have you no thought of Joe?"

"Joe loves me," she said—"loves me a thousand times better than you ever did. Joe's man enough to chance death rather than lose his wife."

"But I won't let you go!" said Gregory.

"You can't stop me," she returned.

He caught her round the body and tried to hold her, but she fought herself free. His strength was

gone; he was as feeble as a child; in the course of those short hours something seemed to have snapped within him. Even Madge was startled at his weakness.

"Greg, you're ill!" she cried, as he staggered, and caught at a backstay to save himself from falling. He sat down on the house and tried to keep back a sob. Madge stooped, and looked anxiously into his face. She had known him for two years as a man of unusual sternness and self-control; obstinate, reserved, willful, and moody; yet one that gave always the impression of unflinching courage and resolution. It was inexplicable now to see him crying like a woman, his square shoulders bent and heaving, his sinewy hands opening and shutting convulsively.

"You're ill," she repeated. "I'll go down and fetch you something."

This pulled him together. "I'm all right, Madge," he said faintly. "I suppose it's just a touch of the old fever. See, it's passing already."

She watched him in silence. Then she stepped forward, dropped down the forecastle hatchway, and reappeared with an ax. While he was wondering what she meant to do, she raised it in the air and crashed it down on the groaning anchor chain. It parted at the first blow, and the *Edelweiss,* now adrift, blundered broadside on to leeward.

Madge ran aft, brought the schooner up in the wind, and cried out to Gregory to get into his boat.

He said sullenly he wouldn't do anything of the kind.

She lashed the wheel and came up to him.

"I mean it, Greg," she said.

"You are going to your death, Madge," he said.

"Get into your boat!" she repeated.

He rose, and slowly began to obey.

"You may kiss me good-by, Greg," she said.

She put up her face to his; their lips met. Then, with her arm around him, she half forced, half supported him to the port quarter, where his boat was slopping against the side. He wanted to resist; he wanted to cry out and tell her the truth, but a strange, leaden powerlessness benumbed him. He got into the dinghy, drew in the dripping painter she cast after him, and watched her ease the sheet and set the vessel scudding for the passage. With her black hair flying in the wind, her bare arms resting lightly on the wheel, her straight, girlish, supple figure bending with the heel of the deck, she never faltered nor looked back as the water whitened and boiled in the schooner's wake.

Gregory came to himself in his own cabin. Cracroft, the mate, was bending over him with a bottle of whisky. The Malita steward was chafing his

naked feet. Overhead the rush and roar of the gale broke pitilessly on his ears.

"The *Edelweiss*!" he gasped; "the *Edelweiss*!"

"Went down an hour ago, sir," said Cracroft grimly.

A SON OF EMPIRE

RAKA-HANGA is a dot of an island in the mid-Pacific, and so far from anywhere that it doesn't belong to a group—as most islands do—but is all by its lonesome in the heave and roll of the emptiest ocean in the world. In my time it was just big enough to support two traders, not counting old man Fosby, who had sort of retired and laid down life's burden in a Kanaka shack, where if he did anything at all it was making bonito hooks for his half-caste family or playing the accordion with his trembly old fingers.

It was me and Stanley Hicks that divided the trade of the place, which was poor to middling, with maybe a couple of hundred tons of copra a year and as much pearl shell as the natives cared to get. It was deep shell, you understand, and sometimes a diver went down and never came up, and you could see him shimmering down below like the back of a shark, as dead as a doornail. Nobody would dive after that, and a whole year might pass with the Kanakas still holding back unless there was a church assessment or a call for something special like a sewing machine or a new boat. It averaged any-

where from five tons to sixty, and often, as I said, nothing at all.

I had got rooted in Raka-hanga, and so had Stanley Hicks, and though we both had ideas of getting away and often talked of it, we never did—being like people half asleep in a feather bed, with life drifting on unnoticed, and the wind rustling in the palms, and one summer day so like another that you lost count of time altogether.

You would have to go far to see a prettier island than Raka-hanga, or nicer, friendlier, finer-looking people; and when I say they never watered their copra on us, nor worked any of those heartbreaking boycotts to bring prices down, you can realize how much out of the beaten track it was and how little they had yet learned of civilization. They were too simple and easy-going for their own good and that's a fact, for they allowed David, the Tongan pastor, to walk all over them, which he did right royal with his great, fat, naked feet; and when anything didn't please this here David nor the deacons, they stuck him or her in the coral jail and locked the door on him—or her—as the case might be and usually was.

We were what might be called a republic, having no king and being supposed to be ruled by the old men, who met from time to time in a wicker-work building that looked more like a giant clothes-basket than anything resembling a house. Yes, Raka-hanga was an independent country, and no flag floated over

us but our own—or would have if we had had one, which we hadn't. Of course Stanley and I knew it could not last like this forever, and even the natives weren't unprepared for our being annexed some day by a passing man-of-war—though all hoped it would go on as it was, with nobody interfering with us nor pasting proclamations on trees. It is all very fine to see "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN" *or* "VIVE LA REPUBLIQUE" at the bottom of a proclamation, but Stanley and I knew it meant taxes and licenses and penal servitude if you did this or failed to do that, and all those other blessings that are served out to a Pacific island when one of the great powers suddenly discovers it on the map.

Our republic was more in name than anything else, for old David, the missionary, ruled the island with a rod of iron, and was so crotchety and tyrannical that no Kanaka could call his soul his own. Every night at nine he stood out in front of his house and rang a hand bell, and then woe betide any one who didn't go to bed instanter and shut up, no matter if it were in the full of the moon and they in the middle of a game of cards or yarning sociable on an upturned boat.

One had to get up just as military and autocratic —and as for dancing, why the word itself could hardly be said, let alone the actual thing, which meant the jail every time and a dose of the pastor's whip thrown in extra. It was a crime to miss

church, and a crime to flirt or make love, and the biggest crime of all was not to come up handsome with church offerings when they were demanded. If you will believe me it was a crime to *grieve* too much if somebody died—if the dead person were married that is, and if you were of the opposite sex and not closely related!

As I said before, the natives were so easy-going that they took it all lying down, and allowed this here David to swell into a regular despot, though there must have been coming on two thousand of them, and him with nothing but his bell and his whip and his big roaring voice. Naturally he did not dare interfere with us white men, though Stanley and I toed the line more than we liked for the sake of business and keeping clear of his ill will. The only one who wasn't scared of the old Tartar, and stood right up to him, was a hulking big Fijian, named Peter Jones. Nobody knew how he came by that name for there wasn't a white drop in his body, he being unusually dark and powerful and full of the Old Nick, and with a mop of hair on him like you never saw, it was that thick and long and stood out on end all round his head which was the Fiji fashion of wearing it.

Peter could lick his weight in wildcats, as the saying goes, and was always ready to do it at the fall of a hat. He was a bullying, overbearing individual and had terrorized his way into a family and

married their daughter, helping himself promiscuous, besides, to anything he fancied, with nobody daring to cross him nor complain. Stanley and I were afraid of him and that's the truth, and gave him a little credit for peace and quietness' sake, which was well worth an occasional can of beef or a fathom or two of Turkey cotton.

Once, when there was a ship in, he got most outrageously drunk, and rolled about the village, singing and yelling—swigging from the bottle he carried and stumbling after the girls, trying to hug them. If ever there was a scandal in Raka-hanga it was the sight of this six-foot-three of raving, roaring savage, rough-housing the place upside down and bellowing insults at the top of his lungs. But nothing was done to stop him till the liquor took its course, and then old David, he gathered the Parliament about him, and ran him into the jail with a one-two-three like a sack of oats.

But Peter Jones was none of your stand-up-at-the-altar-and-repent-boys, being a white man by training, if not by blood, and after he had sobered up, what if his wife didn't smuggle him in a knife, and what if he didn't dig his way out! Yes, sir, that's what Peter Jones did—dug through the gravel floor and tunneled out, rising from the grave, so to speak, to the general uproar and hullabaloo of the entire settlement. Then—no one stopping him—he armed himself with an old Springfield rifle and an

ax and a crowbar, and the cry went up he was going to murder the pastor, with the children running along in front and the women screaming.

But Peter wasn't gunning for any missionary, which even in Raka-hanga might have had a nasty comeback—the natives being mild but not cowards, and beginning to buzz like hornets and reach for their sharktooth spears. No, what Peter was inflamed against was the coral jail, which he set at most ferocious with crowbar and ax until it was nothing but a heap of rubbish. Then he shot holes through the galvanized roofing, and burned it in a blazing fire along of the iron-studded door and window framing. By this time the missionary was trying to raise the multitude against Peter, but they were none too fond of the coral jail themselves and did nothing but hoot and shout like a pack of boys at a circus, which indeed it was and enough to make you split your sides laughing. After that Peter was let alone and nobody dared cross him, no matter what he did.

But this is all by the way to give you an idea of what Raka-hanga was like, and make the rest of the yarn the easier to understand. I shall always feel sorry all my life that Stanley and I were off fishing on the windward side of the island and thereby missed Clemm's arrival in the lagoon, which was well over before we got there, with the stern of a ten-oared boat heading for a man-of-war, and Clemm

himself standing kind of helpless on the beach in the midst of all his chests and boxes and bedding.

He made a splendid appearance in his white clothes and shirt and pipe-clayed shoes and pith-helmet, being a short, thick-set man with gray hair and a commanding look. When we came running up he spoke to us very grand, though genial, saying: "Gentlemen, I am the new Resident Deputy Commissioner, and I call on you to assist me raise the flag and annex this island in the name of her Royal and Imperial Majesty, Queen Victoria!"

At this he took his hat off, and we did the same, though I am an American, and then went on to tell us that he had just been landed by H.M.S. *Ringarooma* to take possession of the island, and would we kindly inform the natives and escort him to the king.

On learning we were a republic and that it would take time to assemble the old men, he condescended to accept my hospitality for a spell, and was most pleased and gracious at the little we could do in his honor. Meanwhile messengers were sent to gather in the chiefs and tell them the great news, and how the Commissioner was soon coming to meet them in the "Speak-house," as the natives called the wickerwork. Mr. Clemm said the *Ringarooma* had been sent under hurry orders to annex right and left in order to forestall the French, who had broken their international agreement and were hoisting

their flag all over the place. He also explained that was the reason why the man-of-war could not stop, it being a neck-and-neck race between her and the French which could reach the Tokelaus first. Between drinks he likewise showed us his commission, which was written very big and imposing on crinkly paper, with seals, where he was called "Our well-beloved and right trusty James Howard Fitzroy Clemm, Esquire,"—as well as the flag he had brought with him, which was an eight-by-twelve ensign, with the halyards all ready to run it up.

I can tell you Stanley and I were mighty proud to escort the Deputy Commissioner to the Parliament, which we did slow and stately in our best pajamas, with the natives reverencing him as he passed and eying us two most respectful. The old men were there in rows, and also David, the pastor, who took the interpreting out of my hands and as usual hogged the whole show. Perhaps it was as well he did, for he had a splendid voice and a booming way of speaking that suited the grandeur of the occasion.

Then Mr. Clemm's commission was read aloud, first by him in English and then by David in Kanaka, and afterwards the Commissioner made a rousing speech, all about the loving English and the low, contemptible French, and at the end he asked everybody to hold up his right hand who wished to be a loyal, faithful, obedient subject of the Great Queen.

Up shot every hand most grateful at the narrow escape they had had of being French; and then outside it was again repeated, even the children holding up their little paws, and the flag hoisted temporary to a coconut palm amid shouts of rejoicing led off by Stanley and me and Peter Jones who had followed along after us.

The next question was where to lodge the Commissioner till a proper house could be built for him, and he showed he wasn't a gentleman to be trifled with by cutting short their jabber, and choosing Fono's, which was the finest in the settlement, and ordering him to clear out, bag and baggage—which Fono didn't want to do and objected very crossly till Peter Jones snatched up a rock and ran at him like he meant to pound his head in. This pleased Mr. Clemm so much that he right off appointed Peter marshal of his court at a salary of forty dollars a month, and put him in charge of shifting his things into his new quarters.

I took the liberty of warning Mr. Clemm against the Fijian, but he only threw back his head and told me most cutting to kindly mind my own business. But any rancor I might have felt at this disappeared when he made me clerk of the court, and Stanley tax collector, each at a salary of sixty dollars a month, with David "Native Adviser and Official Interpreter" at the same figure.

This was the beginning of the new government,

with everything old done away with, and the first official sign of it was a brand-new, white-painted flagpole with crosstrees and ratlines in front of the fine big house that was next built for the Commissioner to live in. The natives had to do this for nothing, supplying forty men, turn and turn about, though the galvanized iron, hardware, paint, varnish and what not were bought of Stanley and me, and paid for in taxes. It was a very fine place when done, with a broad veranda in front and an inner court behind, where Mr. Clemm used to lie in a striped hammock, waited on hand and foot.

But I fancy the wicked French couldn't have taxed the Kanakas any harder than Mr. Clemm did, which was the best thing in the world for them, considering how slack they were by nature and not given to doing anything they could help. It only needed a little attention to double the copra crop of the island, not to speak of shell—so that the taxes were a blessing in disguise, the natives being better off than they had ever been before. Of course they didn't like it and put up a great deal of opposition till Mr. Clemm raised a Native Constabulary of seven men, commanded by Peter Jones, and all of them armed any way he could, including Stanley's shotgun and my Winchester repeater, old man Fosby's Enfield and several rusty Springfields pounced on here and there as against the law to own them.

They were tricked out very smart in red *lava-lavas* and white drill coats, and being all of them of the obstreperous, no-good class like Peter, they were soon the terror of the island. Not that Mr. Clemm didn't keep them tight in hand, but when it came to an order of court or any backwardness in taxes he never seemed to care much whom they plundered and beat, which was what they reveled in and thirsted for the chance of.

Old David was the first to feel the weight of authority, and I believe his job of Native Adviser was merely a plan to keep him in good humor till Mr. Clemm was ready to squash him, which Mr. Clemm did three months later most emphatic. The Kanakas were forbidden to contribute to the church, and the pastor's private laws were abolished, and there was no more excommunicating nor jail for church members nor any curfew either. The natives went wild with joy—all except a few old soreheads that are always to be found in every community—and the only folks who were now forced to go to church were the Native Constabulary, who lined up regular to keep tab on what the missionary preached, and arrest him for sedition in case he let his tongue run away with him.

In private, however, old David made all the trouble he dared, and tried to hearten up his followers by saying there would be a day of reckoning for Mr. Clemm when the missionary vessel arrived

on her annual visit—at which the Commissioner pretended to laugh but couldn't hide he was worried. Leastways he asked a raft of questions about the *Evangel of Hope,* and that with a ruminating look, and about the character of the people in charge which were Captain Bins and the Reverend T. J. Simpkins. The *Evangel of Hope* never stayed any longer than to land a few stores and hymn books for the pastor and take off what copra and shell he had acquired by way of church subscriptions. At that time she was about due in two months, and we all laughed at the empty larder she was going to find, though, as I said, Mr. Clemm seemed worried, remarking it was hard to be misrepresented and slandered when his only thought was for the good of the island.

He was certainly upsetting things very lively and bossed the island like it belonged to him. If the natives could play all they wanted, now that David was deposed, they had bumped into something they had never known before and that was—work. The Commissioner couldn't abide laziness in a Kanaka, and went at them terrific, building a fine road around the island and another across it, with bridges and culverts, where he used to ride of a sundown in a buggy he had bought off Captain Sachs of the *H. L. Tiernan,* with men tugging him instead of horses, and the Native Constabulary trotting along in the rear like a Royal Progress.

He built a fine-appearing wharf, too, and an improved jail with a cement floor, and heaven help anybody who threw fish-guts on the shore or didn't keep his land as clean as a new pin. There was a public well made in the middle of the settlement, with cement steps and a white-painted fence to keep away the pigs, and the natives, though they hated to work, were proud, too, of what they had done, and I doubt if they had ever been so prosperous or freer of sickness. I know Stanley and I doubled our trade, in spite of having to take out heavy licenses, which meant that not only we, but everybody else were that much better off. Petty thieving disappeared entirely, and likewise all violence, and one of the Commissioner's best reforms was a land court where titles were established and boundaries marked out, that stopping the only thing the Kanakas ever seriously quarreled about. Six months of the Commissioner had revolutionized the island, and few would have cared to go back to the old loose days when your only Supreme Court was the rifle hanging on your wall.

Well, it grew nearer and nearer for the *Evangel of Hope* to arrive, and Mr. Clemm he began to do a most extraordinary thing, which was nothing else than a large cemetery! Yes, sir, that's what Mr. Clemm did, tearing down five or six houses for the purpose on the lagoon side, nigh the wharf, and planting rows on rows of white headstones, with

low mounds at each, representing graves. There must have been a couple of hundred of them, and often it was a whitewashed cross instead of a stone or maybe a pointed stake—the whole giving the impression of a calamity that had suddenly overtaken us.

It was no good asking him what it was for; the Commissioner wasn't a man to be questioned when he didn't want to be; all he said was that Stanley and I were to stick inside our stores when the ship came and not budge an inch till we were told. With us orders were orders, but the Kanakas were panicky with terror, and that cemetery with nobody in it seemed to them like tempting Providence. It took all of Mr. Clemm's authority to keep them quiet, and it got out that the Commissioner was expecting the end of the world, and the graves were for those that wouldn't go to heaven! Kanakas are like that, you know—spreading the silliest rumors and making a lot out of nothing—though in this case they couldn't be blamed for being considerable scared. But Mr. Clemm knew how to turn everything to account, and on the principle that the church was the safest place to be found in on the Day of Judgment, ordered that everybody should go there the moment he fired three pistol shots from his veranda. I noticed, however, that the Native Constabulary seemed to be taking the end of the world mighty calm, which looked like they had been tipped off ahead for something quite different.

But the meaning of the cemetery appeared later when one morning, along of ten or so, my little boy came running in to say the *Evangel* was sighted in the pass. Of course, I stuck indoors, mindful of instructions, though that didn't prevent me from looking out of my upper window and taking in all that happened. The first was a tremendous yellow flag raised on the Commissioner's staff, and the second were those three pistol shots which were to announce the Day of Judgment. Then you ought to have seen the settlement scoot! There was a rush for the church like the animals at the Ark, though old David, the pastor, wasn't any Noah. Him and the deacons were led down to the jail and locked in, and then Peter Jones and his constables divided into two parties—three of them returning to the church, while the other three with Peter got a boat ready, with another yellow flag in the stern.

By this time the missionary vessel was well up under a spanking spread of canvas, with the water hissing at her bows and parting white and sparkling in a way dandy to watch. You could almost feel her shiver at the sight of Peter's yellow flag rowing towards her, and through the glass I noticed a big commotion aboard, with half a dozen racing up the rigging and making signs at those below. It was plainer than words that they had seen the cemetery and were struck of a heap, which was no wonder

considering how new and calamitous it looked, with them rows on rows of neat little headstones and nicely mounded graves.

She never even dropped her anchor nor lowered her gangway, but hove to, short; and when Peter came up he was made to lay on his oars and keep his distance, yelling what he had to say with both hands at his face while the captain he yelled back with a speaking trumpet. Of course I didn't hear a word, but it was easy enough to put two and two together, remembering the sea meaning of a yellow flag which is seldom else than smallpox. Yes, that was why we had all took and died in the new cemetery, and that was why the settlement looked so lifeless and deserted! After no end of a powwow they hoisted out a boat, and when it was loaded to the gunwales with stores and cases, it was cast off for Peter to pick up and take in tow. It held half a ton of medical comforts, and I often had the pleasure of drinking some of them afterwards on Mr. Clemm's veranda, where we all agreed it was prime stuff and exactly suited to our complaints.

What old David thought of it all through the bars of the coral jail can only be left to the imagination. He had been banking on the *Evangel* to turn the scales against Mr. Clemm, and there she was heading out of the lagoon again, not to return for another year! We celebrated it that night with medical comforts unstinted, while the natives they

celebrated, too, thankful to find the world still here and the Day of Judgment postponed. Old David wrote a red-hot protest, countersigned by the deacons, and not knowing what else to do with it, sealed it in a demijohn and threw it into the sea, where like enough it still is, bobbing around undelivered to the missionary society and still waiting for the angels to take charge of it.

Mr. Clemm's next move was to start building a small cutter of twenty tons, which he named the *Felicity* and charged to the government as an official yacht. Old man Fosby had been a shipwright in years gone by, and under his direction the Kanakas made a mighty fine job of the little vessel, which was fitted up regardless and proved to be remarkably fast and weatherly. She was the apple of the Commissioner's eye, with a crew of four in uniform, and a half-caste Chinaman named Henry for captain, whom he had persuaded to desert from a German schooner where he was mate. Mr. Clemm was so fond of taking short cruises in the *Felicity* that we never gave his coming and going much thought, till one day he went off and never came back! Yes, sir, clean disappeared over the horizon and was never seen again from that day to this, nor the party with him which included several very fine-looking young women!

The natives took it like the loss of a father, which indeed it was, Mr. Clemm being a grand man and

universally beloved—kindly yet strict, and always the soul of justice. After giving him up altogether for lost, we put seals on his private effects, and Peter Jones took charge of the government, advised by Stanley and me. It showed the splendid influence Mr. Clemm had had that Peter had become quite a model, and instead of breaking loose was all on the side of law and order. Our idea was to hold the fort until a new Commissioner might be sent, and the only slight change we made was to double our salaries. The natives had grown so used to civilized government that they made no trouble, and we three might have been governing the island yet if a man-of-war hadn't suddenly popped in.

It was the *Ringarooma,* the self-same ship that had landed Mr. Clemm some eighteen months before, and Stanley and I were the first to board her, meeting the captain at the break of the poop, just when he had come down from the bridge.

"I have the honor to report the disappearance of Deputy Commissioner James Howard Fitzroy Clemm," said I. "He sailed from here on March sixteenth in the government yacht *Felicity,* and has never been seen nor heard from since."

The captain, who was a sharp, curt man, looked puzzled.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said, as abrupt as a thunderbolt.

"Why, sir, you landed him yourself," said Stan-

ley, "and the same day he took possession of the island and hoisted the British flag."

"Annexed us," said I.

The captain frowned very angry, like if we were making sport of him we should fast rue it.

"I never landed anybody here but a fellow named Baker," he said. "I deported him from the Ellice Islands for sedition, bigamy, selling gin to the natives, suspected arson and receiving stolen goods. If he called himself a Deputy Commissioner he was a rank impostor, and had no more authority to annex this island than you have."

Months afterwards we learned that instead of being lost in the *Felicity* like we all had thought, Clemm had turned pirate in a small way down to the Westward till the natives took and ate him at Guadalcanaar.

CLOUD OF BUTTERFLIES

Behind Apia, on the edge of the Taufusi swamp, was a small collection of huts, jumbled together in squalor and dirt, with pigs dozing in the ooze and slatternly women beating out *siapo* in the shade. It was a dunghill of out-islanders, Nieues, Uveans, Tongans, Tapatueans, banded together in a common poverty; landless people of other archipelagoes, despised of the Samoans, and paying tribute to the lord of the soil—a few men in war; a grudging hog in times of peace.

Here lived O'olo, a boy of twenty, whose chief-like face, and fine manly bearing marked him as one apart in that nest of outcasts. He was of Tongan blood, though all he knew of his parents was that they had escaped from Nukualofa at the time of the Persecution, and had died in Samoa when he was a child. Old Siosi, who had adopted him, could tell him no more than that; not that O'olo asked many questions, being content to drift on the ocean of life, and careless of anything save what belonged to the day. He weeded taro, occasionally worked for thirty-five cents a day at the unloading of ships; stole bread-fruit and bananas up the mountain, and slept peacefully at night on the stones of Siosi's floor.

If ever he envied the Samoans, the mood was brief, and seldom darkened his spirits for long. To him the Samoans were a race above, with splendid houses, and spacious lands, and a haughty contempt for such an eatbush at O'olo, the Tongan; and O'olo looked up at them mightily, and respected them as a dog does a man, though sometimes he said: "I wish God had made *me* a Samoan"; and then the swamp appeared very dismal to O'olo, and the huts mean and noisome, and the mallets seemed to be pounding on his heart instead of the suddy bark.

Now it happened that a new clergyman came to the coral church on the other side of the coconut grove, and what was more important to O'olo brought with him a lovely daughter. O'olo did not know how important it was till he first met Evanitalina in the path, and was so suddenly stricken with her beauty that he had hardly the sense to make way for her to pass. Slim and graceful, with her glossy hair gathered at the nape with a ribbon, and her bright *lavalava* kilted to the knee, she gave O'olo a glance as sparkling as moonlight on a pool, all her young womanhood alive to his confusion, and quick to divine its cause. Though her eyes had scarcely dwelt on him an instant, she had seen enough for her heart to say: *Panga!* What a handsome youth"; and was filled with a strange elation in which there was a dart of pain.

On her return O'olo was still where she had left

him, though in his hand was a crimson *aute* blossom that had not been there before; and when she drew close he held it out, saying: "Oh, lady, here is a little worthless gift!" She took it smiling, and put it behind her ear, and had it been a pig or a fine mat no sweeter could have been her words of gratitude, for Evanitalina had been well brought up, and courtesy was as natural to her as breathing.

"I am named O'olo," said the young man, "and if you like *aute* blossoms, every day shall I bring you some."

"I am Evanitalina, the daughter of Samuelu, the clergyman," she returned, "and I shall be glad of the blossoms, for as yet thy father has tabooed no lands for our garden."

Then O'olo realized she had mistaken him for the son of Amatuanai, the chief, and while flattered he was also much cast down.

"I am only a Tongan," he said, deprecatorily, shame halting his tongue, "and I live yonder where you see that nameless-animal rooting in the slough —though to God a Tongan is every bit as good as a Samoan, and the only chiefs are those who are strong in faith."

Evanitalina hastened to agree with him, though she was very disappointed just the same, for he was so handsome, and had such pleasant manners, and an air so noble and winning that she had never doubted he was of rank. She herself was of the

exalted I'i family, of Safotulafai, and her grandfather was Tu'imaleali'ifano, and her great-grandfather had been Tu-ia'ana. Yet as she went on, the memory of O'olo stayed with her like the scent of frangipani, and for all he was a Tongan and without land or position, she felt a great tenderness for him; and taking the crimson flower she pressed it to her bosom, trembling with joy as she did so, and saying to herself: "I love thee, I love thee, I love thee!"

The next day they met again, and the next after that, and soon the village gossips were all of a chatter, though not a word of it reached the Reverend Samuelu nor his wife. But if Evanitalina dared not tell her parents of O'olo, in her conduct at least she was as good as gold, and every time she held a tryst with her sweetheart, she took her little brother with her as convention demands; and Polo, bribed with sugar cane, sucked and chewed at the pieces O'olo peeled for him, his shaven head untroubled by the woes of his elders. They, alas, were very wretched, for O'olo had saved up two dollars, which was what to get married costs, and was urging Evanitalina to run away with him to Atua; while she, with superior wisdom called his proposal that of a delirious person, for how were they to live afterwards except slavelike on the bounty of others? When he answered they could return to Siosi and the swamp, her lip curled scornfully, and she reminded

him she was of the renowned I'i family, accustomed to dignity and ease, to whom the settlement of out-islanders was hardly better than a wallow of nameless-animals.

Now, however true this might be, it was hurtful to O'olo's pride, and he was often goaded into sharp retorts which invited others even sharper, so that their passion might be compared to a mountain, up one side of which they climbed in joy and gladness, to descend on the other in alienation. Not that they loved each other any less; that, indeed, was the most cruel part of it; and when at last they separated it was with breaking hearts.

The days that followed were heavy with sorrow, for each strove ardently to pain the other, and with every stab thus inflicted there were two wounds, one in the giver and one in the stricken person. O'olo spent his two dollars in riot and debauchery, and when released from prison fell into greater evil, so that his communion-ticket was withdrawn, and those who missed taro, or chickens, or run-wild daughters used to say darkeningly: "Lo, it is that Taufusi Tongan," and sought to waylay him with an ax.

Evanitalina, in her turn, encouraged the wooing of Viliamu, a highly-connected young man, whose father was a Member of Parliament, and who earned a dollar and a half a day in the explosion-water manufactory. In this profession he was won-

drous skilful, and could be seen daily under a shed, directing the apparatus, and giving orders to his helpers like a white man. A bottle of explosion-water held no more than half a coconut, yet it was sold for ten cents, and it was a perplexity that anybody liked it, for it shot up your nose like the rush of a bat, and made you choke and sneeze, as Evanitalina discovered when once Viliamu brought her some. But it was a fine thing to be able to make it, and earn a dollar and a half a day, and dress magnificently, and give costly presents; and though Evanitalina did not love Viliamu she admired him, and accepted his gifts, and thought wickedly how it must afflict O'olo to see her and Viliamu seated on the same mat, or with their heads side by side on the same bamboo pillow.

Nor was Viliamu her only suitor, for there was also Carl, the German half-caste, who was captain of a schooner, and wore trousers and a black sash, and owned valuable property in Savalolo; Carl who called for her almost every Sunday in a buggy, and took her driving like a white lady, to Vailele or Vaitele or Utumapu; Carl of the ringing laugh, and jolly, smiling face, and tattooed girl-fish on his arm, who could sing, and do tricks with cards, and invent the funniest forfeits when they all played games, and yet, who at leave-time never failed to say with seriousness: "Oh, my pigeon, am I to love uselessly forever?"

Again and again was Evanitalina drawn to take Viliamu, and then to take Captain Carl, for Samuelu was always urging that a final decision be come to, knowing the folly of maids, and the lack and fewness of worthy men for husbands. But as she was on the brink, like a diver pausing before the plunge, her eyes would alight on O'olo, smolderingly regarding her from afar, and then her whole strength would turn to water, and not for anything would she have married Carl, though all Savalolo belonged to him, and all the ships of the sea; nor likewise would she have married Viliamu, even had he owned the explosion-water manufactory and been himself a Member of Parliament, for of her heart there was but one master, and that was the Tongan.

But, alas, there was no coming together, for O'olo in his despair had put himself beyond all intercourse with those of honor, becoming a terror and a scourge, and inhabiting the jail more frequently than Siosi's roof-tree; and nightly, when he was free, he caroused with low companions, drinking gin, and cooking stolen pigs, and eating stolen taro, and saying in his infamy: "Why should I work for thirty-five cents a day when all the Tuamasanga is mine?"

Yet the rich food had no flavor in his mouth, and though the gin maddened his spirit, it could not drown his wretchedness, for deep within him, like a maggot in a bread-fruit, was the torment of love.

Sometimes in prison he would lower his head like a cow, and run at the wall, exclaiming: "I will die, I will die!" And then he would fall, with his beautiful hair all matted with blood, and his beautiful body next to lifeless, though with his purpose unattained, owing to the thickness of his skull. Surely no person in hell was ever more unhappy than O'olo, and it is with grief one tells of him, for he was like a child, who, on being refused a mango throws away his banana in wilfulness—and with him, his banana was right conduct, and the respect of others, and the laws of God, leaving him nothing save an aching spirit.

Then the war came, with the Tuamasanga in an uproar from end to end, every young man being called to arms, and troops pouring in from Tutuila and the westward to join in the onslaught against Mataafa. The Taufusi people, as foreigners, were not liable to the levy except for two striplings by way of rent, both of whom were subscribed with unwillingness, though neither was O'olo. This Evanitalina learned with joy, for death was in the air and bloody fighting nigh at hand, and her tenderness for O'olo, lying secret in her bosom, like a red-hot coal, was fanned to the flame of agony. But no, he was fortunately in the lock-up, and it was reported he had said scornfully of the war: "A Tongan gentleman has no concern with the squabbles of dogs"; which, if insulting, was not without the balm of reassurance to Evanitalina, greatly dreading.

One drowsy afternoon, however, as she was sewing under the eaves, alone except for Polo, who had made a Mataafa soldier of the dog, and was pretending, victoriously, to cut the animal's head off with a piece of wood, as so soon, in reality, would be happening to living men, pierced with wounds, and lying in their blood—one hot afternoon while nothing stirred except the flies, and even these buzzed sleepily, Evanitalina of a sudden was roused by the sound of steps, and looking up, beheld a warrior advancing towards the house. His face was blackened with charcoal, as is the custom, and about his hair was the scarlet scarf of the Government, and against his skin glistened a belt of cartridges; and his walk was fearless and proud, as befitted so handsome a man and one of such noble mien.

"Talofa," he said, and then Evanitalina gave a cry, for it was O'olo; and with that cry, every thought vanished except her love, which rose tumultuously within her like a wave bursting between rocks, and foaming white over them, so that she could answer not a word to his greeting, but stared uselessly at him like a dead person.

"I am going to the war," explained O'olo, bending down on his beautiful legs, and bringing his face so close to hers that his breath was on her cheek. "Doubtless I shall die, for with many so brave it will be difficult for me to excel them, though that is my intention at whatever cost."

"But how is it you are not in prison?" inquired Evanitalina, recovering her voice, and speaking in a tremble. "The judge allotted you two months, and lo, here you are with only sixteen days of it expended."

At this O'olo's heart warmed, for it showed him how assiduous had been Evanitalina's counting of his imprisonment, for it was exactly sixteen days, even as she said, she tallying it every morning with a little stone; and it spoke to him better than words of the endurance and strength of her love, which, like his own, was as fathomless as the sea.

"I was made free on this condition," he said, touching his rifle, "and though to me the Government is nothing, nor the King, nor the quarrel more than that of gulls on a rock, or the squeals of nameless-animals over carrion, yet I consented for thy sake, Evanitalina."

"My sake?" she exclaimed, astonished. "Were it to please me I would implore thee to remain behind, though I thought my name had long ceased to be anything to thee, and that I was utterly forgotten and cast aside."

"So did I try to make it," he said, "for no shark could have been more cruel than thee to me, nor any bat more blind to worth, and because I had neither lands nor family thou drovest me forth with contempt."

"It was the insufficiency of the two dollars,

O'olo," she protested, "and not that of my love, which was unbounded; and if I merited punishment for what seemed right to me, have I not received it, and atoned a thousand times over for my fault? Did Viliamu gain me for all his wealth and position, or did Carl the half-caste take me to wife? I was truer to thee than ever thou wast to me, and nightly I wept, and held the memory of thee in my arms, like a mother whose babe is dead. And this I will do, if thou wilt return to jail, and break the covenant of thy freedom—I will marry thee, and go live with thee in Siosi's house, and forfeit rank and honor and the regard of all, reckoning them as naught in the comparison of thy love."

At this O'olo could hardly keep back his tears, so greatly was he overcome; and his hand met Evanitalina's and clasped on hers, and his chest shook like one grief-stricken at the death of a near relation. He had learned many things since he had become bad, and knew better than before the gulf that lay between an eat-bush like himself and a member of the renowned I'i family. Our Lord in the desert was not more tempted by the kingdoms of the world that he at that moment by Evanitalina, who was offering herself in all her young beauty for his delight.

But resolutely he put the devil behind him, saying: "I will not have thee stoop to me, so that persons shall mock at thy choice, and the parable of

the pearl and the nameless-animal shall be repeated in the Taufusi swamp. No! I shall make of this war a ladder, and reach glory or die and to that I am determined as never was man before. If I come back it shall be as one famous for prowess, bearing heads that I have taken, and with chiefs eager to adopt me. Thus shall I return, an eat-bush no longer nor despised, but a David who has slain his Goliath, with the multitude applauding, and the greatest of the Tuamasanga vying to give me the title of their son. Or, if not that, then shall I claim the land God withholds not from every man, nay, not from the poorest or the lowest, and the name of that land is the grave."

At this Evanitalina sobbed, and clung pitifully to O'olo, and pressed his head to her bosom, unmindful of decorum, and so consumed by misery she was like a person in a fit. O'olo, too, was suffocated with sadness, for it seemed a dreadful thing to die and be cast blood-stained into a pit, he that was so handsome, and in the flood of his youth, with perhaps his dissevered head tossing in the air amid shouts and triumph. Indeed, so lost was he in wretchedness that he was taken unawares by Samuelu on his way inland from a deacons' meeting, who, convulsed, seized a coconut branch, and ran at him, crying: "Let there be a going, thou worthless one! Fly, thou of the Belial family, and be quick with it, else I shall whip thee hence like a cur!"

And with that he whipped and whipped at O'olo, departing, for the Tongan was too mannerly to strike a clergyman, and one so greatly his senior, though his spirit smarted worse than his body at the insult. Thus he passed from the sight of Evanitalina, like a horse being chased from a bread-fruit plantation, with no time to look back, or wave with his hand a last greeting.

He marched the same day with the Vaiala contingent under the high-chief Asi, and that night, shivering on the wet ground, O'olo had his first taste of war. As to it he had many misconceptions, not reckoning on the severity of the rule, or the trifling importance attached to a Tongan, however lionlike his heart. He saw that he was one of many, a grain in a heap of sand, who might at an order be kept in the rear, and never hear the whistle of a bullet, or earn the chance of distinction. In the army, too, little thought was taken of food, so that one banana was given for breakfast, and for dinner a coconut, which O'olo found hard, he having always been a hearty eater, and accustomed to *palusami* and luxuries. The monotony also, was unendurable, especially when the tobacco was gone, and one was forbidden to move, being condemned to sit hungry and distressed for a whole day at a time, sucking a white stone by way of alleviation. To O'olo a white stone was very insufficient for nourishment, and so he tried grass and weeds like

Nebuchadnezzar, to the undoing of his stomach, which dissatisfied, was afflicted with cramps, so that he rolled and rolled in pain, and lamented loudly, till Asi cried out: "Make that Tongan to cease from bellowing, or else the enemy will surely discover us!"

But let it not be said that O'olo was womanish or afraid, for on the contrary he thirsted for battle like King David, whom he took for his example, and his repining was due to the backwardness of his rulers and the tightness of their leash. When at last the advance was ordered on the Mataafa stronghold he was noticeable for his leaps of joy; and while others wore an anxious appearance and showed uncertainty in their walk, O'olo sang with exultation, and stepped out as though on his way to a feast.

The stronghold was of stone, and had been used by the Germans for the retaining of cattle, and stood solitary on a hill with the land falling away on every side. As it flashed and sparkled with the Mataafa fire it was seen by O'olo to be a place not easy to capture, with much loss to be experienced before ax could cross ax, and knife meet knife, in the final charge; so that, with wisdom, he shot little in order not to tire himself, and hugged the ground in a manner suggestive of terror rather than boldness, for to be killed here was useless and foreign to his purpose, fame resting in the fort, and there the heads to be taken. Thus, when they sprang up at

the call, he was unfatigued, with cartridges still in his gun, and wind in his body, and up the hill he raced with swiftness, so that scarcely two of his companions matched pace with him, and those who had cried: "Coward, coward!" panted in his rear, and perceived it was a hero they had mocked.

Nor at the gateway was there any slackening of Tongan valor, and over it O'olo scrambled, undeterred by rifle and ax, so that it was a miracle that he stayed alive as he dropped within, even as Daniel into the lion's den, beset by twenty, and he alone. It was like a tempest and he in the center, and for lightning was the flame of the guns, and for thunder the roar of their explosion, and for the raging sea the crash of blows, given and taken, and the sobbing breath of men. Here the Tongan rock withheld the enemy, while the army of the Government rolled over the wall in a resistless torrent, and with tumult and fury beset the Mataafas until they fled. Now, O'olo, with coolness, had already marked an old chief of towering stature and magnificent appearance as the one whose head he would take, unwishful of a boy's, or that of a person of no importance, and him he pressed hard in the rout, and at last laid low with the butt of his weapon, straddling his body, and prepared to hack at his throat with his knife.

The old chief, whose hurt had not bereft him of his senses, begged piteously for his life in a voice choked by the weight of O'olo on his chest, and

troubled by the imminence of death; offering first ten cans of biscuit, and then twenty, and then property and fine mats in quantities unstinted. But O'olo, although it was like a beautiful dream come true, dallied with the killing, being squeamish in regard to it, and needing a space to confirm his resolution, he saying with derision: "Thou pig-faced person, thou hast not the property thou namest, and even wert thou the Lord of the earth, yet still would I take thy head!" To which the fallen warrior made answer: "I am Tangaloa, the high-chief of Leatatafili, in Savai'i, and the property I speak of is no myth, and all of it thine if thou wilt spare me." To which O'olo replied: "And when I should claim it, verily thou wouldst forget thy covenant, and order thy young men to chastise me forth, they laughing at the cheat, and I with neither head nor property, and the back of me lacerated with blows!" Then the old chief fell into a great tremble, repeating: "No, no," his flesh shrinking on his bones, and horror in his face; and as O'olo looked down at him, making motions with his knife, the Tongan's thought was suddenly moved into a new direction, and lo, it was like a burning torch in a cavern, so bright it was in the darkness of his previous purpose, he saying: "Oh, Tangaloa, there is a price, and that is my adoption as thy son, and to that wilt thou pledge thyself in an oath before God?" To which, overjoyed, the venerable warrior consented with im-

petuosity, crying out that he would do so, and seeing in the proposal the high-chief-hand of God, for had not his own son lately died?

"And cherish me, and love me?" demanded O'olo with renewed motions of his knife, he undesirous of showing too great a willingness, and pretending indecision, besides doubting the chief's integrity.

"As God sees me that I will perform," said Tangaloa, "and now in my extremity I perceive the worth of true dealing with every man, for all my past years stand in witness to my honor, and he who trusted me has never been deceived."

At this O'olo was reassured, and he repeated the oath for Tangaloa to say after him, making it very full and exact, with nothing omitted; and then he kissed the old man, beginning to feel for him the tenderness of a son, he that had never had a father until this moment, and now having gained one of the loftiest rank; and he raised him lovingly, and bound his wound with a strip of cloth, and bedarlinged him, Tangaloa returning his love, and saying again and again: "Blessed be God that He has sent me a son for my protection."

Nor were these words of empty import, for others of the victorious army were much displeased at O'olo's clemency, and would have torn away Tangaloa and killed him, had not O'olo resisted with lowered gun and a threatening expression, so that he dared not leave his father for an instant so

greedy were the warriors for his head. All that day he crouched beside him, with neither water to drink nor food to eat, guarding Tangaloa preciously; and had it not been for the confusion that attends the finish of a battle, and the lessening of authority that follows, he would have been overpowered by a multitude, and all his bravery wasted. But those who assailed him were without cohesion or settled plan, and they were as dogs, rushing up to affright, and then losing courage at O'olo's demeanor, which was fierce and unshaken, with his rifle at the cock.

It was a day terrible to remember in its heat and hunger and unbearable thirst, with about them the headless dead, festering in the sun and blackening, and over them the sky without a cloud, and always at their hearts the dread of Asi and the chiefs, returning to kill them both. At dusk it seemed as though O'olo could never get his father to his feet, so destroyed was the old man by weakness and disinclination, and he was as a sinking canoe, or a sting-ray flopping on the reef, and abandoned by the tide. But O'olo persevered, dragging and supporting him until coconuts were reached, where he climbed a tree and threw down *nui* in abundance; and as they drank the water they were greatly refreshed, and with every bite of the rind, vigor returned, and with vigor, boldness. Then Tangaloa said: "Let us pray"; and with that they both went down on their knees, the old chief beseeching God

for deliverance, and repeating again and again his thankfulness for O'olo, and for the nuts.

But all was far from finished, and there was much for God to do yet if ever He destined them to gain the security of Savai'i; and O'olo proclaimed his intention of hiding in the mountains, and going eastward circuitously, and making no sign or stir until the close of the war, and the withdrawal of the Tuamasanga from A'ana. To this Tangaloa agreed without argument, resigning himself like a little child to O'olo's guidance, and making no demur when the Tongan said: "Let us rise and go, for by dawn we must be on the heights, and beyond pursuit."

Thus determined, they took the plantation road upward, assisted by the moon which was near its full; and toilsomely attaining the limits of the cultivated land, buried themselves in the tomb of the forest. Here, with groping and hurt, and frequent misdirection, they struggled on and on, making of a watercourse their path, and at times so hidden in the defile of rocks that it was as though the earth had closed over them. In this manner were many hours spent until at last Tangaloa fell exhausted on a bank of ferns, saying: "More I cannot do." Then O'olo built a fire to warm his parent, who was perishing of cold, and rubbed his legs, and shaped a bough for his pillow, and kissed him lovingly; and when the old man said: "I am convinced we

shall die"; he answered stoutly, "No, we shall live, for God has not brought us thus far to desert us now"; at which Tangaloa was comforted and went to sleep, while O'olo watched and watched beside him, his heart much troubled by the evil of their situation, and the frailty of the old chief, and the assailing doubts as to whether, after all, they should ever escape.

The news of O'olo's desertion was variously twisted by the returning troops, so that to Evanitalina, inquiring in anguish, there were as many tales as men. Some would have it that they had seen him die, giving details; others that he had run away from the battle, in wildness and panic; others praised him truthfully for a hero, and as the first to leap the fort. Of these there was a fewness, for the most preferred to laud themselves or their relations rather than another, and accordingly most of the chatter was scornful of O'olo, and to his discredit. But Evanitalina knew that O'olo was no coward, and her misgiving was that he was dead, which deepened with the passing of months, and no sign nor token coming to prove the contrary. Viliamu, too, was assiduous in declaring it, which he did with artfulness and pretended sorrow, urging all the while his own suit, like a squid of apparent harmlessness on the surface, but with its suckers enfolding venemously below.

Never was a maid in sadder straits, widowed before she was a wife, and unceasingly plagued by Samuelu to marry either Viliamu or Carl. She grew thin, and when she walked it was like a sick person, staggeringly, and once of so passionate a temper she changed to a gentleness that nothing could disturb. The compassion of the other maids lavished itself upon her, for they saw that she was dying of grief for her beloved; and at night, when wooed under the stars, they spoke with tenderness of O'olo and Evanitalina, and of their love so cruelly ruptured; so that every one wept, even young men who previously had had neither consideration nor sense, to whom a maid was a maid, were only she pretty, and who would have hastened for another had the first died; which shows that true love is like a seed, growing and becoming a tree, from which others eat the fruit to their own improvement, and increased understanding.

Every day Evanitalina grew more weak, yet unlike most sick persons, she was without fear at her condition, even welcoming it, and saying: "Soon I shall pass beyond the skies on my last *malanga*"; an once when she saw a wilted *aute,* she said: "Such am I, once blooming and now a-droop," and with that she plucked fiercely at the petals, and crushed them in her hand, as though she were hastening her own extinction.

One morning, shortly after prayers, as she re-

clined on a mat, with her eyes raised to that far-away country of which she often spoke, while Samuelu sat at the table, writing his sermon, there appeared on the village green three old gentlemen of stately and impressive appearance, bearing staves, who, stopping at that distance, inquired loudly whether this was the house of Samuelu, the clergyman? Then being greeted, and answered, "Yes," the three old gentlemen ceremoniously advanced, and ranged themselves within the eaves, saying that they had come on a wooing-party of sixty boats with Cloud-of-Butterflies, the young chief of Leatatafili, who was seeking a wife. At this, marveling greatly, Samuelu informed them they were mistaken as to the house, since his highness Cloud-of-Butterflies was unknown to him, and he surely unknown to Cloud-of-Butterflies. But the old orators replied, No, they were not mistaken, and asked had he not a daughter named the Lady Evanitalina, for it was for her that Cloud-of-Butterflies, in sixty boats, was at hand to offer marriage.

Then Samuelu's amazement redoubled, and even Evanitalina, previously languid, looked up surprised, and in her face was a strange expression like that of a startled pigeon; and on being asked in a becoming speech whether she would condescend to receive the visitor and his gifts, she answered with bewilderment that it was as her father wished, at which Samuelu said, "Yes," with no great willingness,

desiring to continue his sermon, and dreading the outlay in *'ava* for the reception of so vast a company. Then the three old gentlemen excused themselves in polished phrases, full of beauty and eloquence, and retired to inform Cloud-of-Butterflies that the Lady Evanitalina was desirous that he should come.

Shortly afterwards there was the beat of drums, and the tramp of multitudes, and the screaming of innumerable pigs borne on poles, and a sound like that of an advancing army, thunderous and roaring. The eaves of every house was black with onlookers, and there were white people, galloping up on horses, astounded, and many others on foot, running. Then, shaking the ground with its progress the procession marched into view; and of pigs there seemed two hundred, and of men a number beyond counting; and at the head were youths, throwing their rifles in the air as they sang and danced. But of these things Evanitalina was scarcely heedful, for with breathless body and quivering heart her whole attention was on Cloud-of-Butterflies in the center of the pageant, who, girded in a priceless mat, and wearing at his throat a whale-tooth necklace, and surrounded with deference and honor, was not to her Cloud-of-Butterflies at all, but O'olo, arisen from the grave, and hastening to claim her for his bride.

BEN

I WAS in the bark Ransom, with twenty tons of trade aboard, and looking for a station up in the Westward, when I fixed it up with Tom Feltenshaw at Arorai Island to buy him out. It was a good little station, and far better than I could have hoped for at the money I had to offer, with a new tin roof and a water tank and a copra shed with a cement floor, and an imported banana in an imported ton of earth to give a natty effect to the back view—the front being all reef and dazzle and Pacific Ocean.

Lonesome? Coffin-lid, nail-her-down, lonesome—why, of course! Was there ever a coral island that wasn't? But there was copra in plenty; only one other trader and him a boozer; quite a bit of pearl shell, and Tom's book showing how he had cleared thirty-three hundred dollars in a year. He had boils something awful, and for the last two years it had just been a fight to stick it out. I came along when the boils had won all along the line, with Tom ready to leave everything all standing in order to get away.

There hadn't been a ship in five months, and he had come mighty near pegging out, having made his will and tacked it to the shed door, besides giving the natives receipts in advance that he had died a

natural death, they being afraid some passing man-of-war might hold them responsible and shoot up the island.

We had settled everything, counted out the money, and shook hands when Tom says, over a good-by nip of Square-face: "Oh, that girl of mine, Ben, —you'll take care her, won't you?"

"Girl?" says I.

"She's broke in to cooking and washing and white ways," explains Tom, "and it'd go against my conscience to feel I hadn't left her comfortable."

"Let's see her," I said.

He called her in, and one glance at her settled the matter. She was about eighteen, as slim and straight as a dart, and, by far and away, the prettiest woman I had seen in the group. She stood there mighty sullen as I sized her up, and admired her splendid black hair that was bound by a red ribbon at the nape of her neck, very coquettish and attractive. I've always liked that proud, to-hell-with-you look in a girl, and it seemed to make her better worth having, like there was something to master before you could have your will with her. Yes, it was bargain day for me all right, and the store wasn't the only thing I was getting cheap.

"What she saying?" I asked, as she spoke something in Kanaka to Tom, showing real pretty teeth.

"She won't stay if you whip her," grins Tom.

"Bless her heart, I won't whip her," I says, think-

ing to break the ice by pulling her down on my knee. But she struggled like a wildcat, and Tom, he suddenly turns red-hot jealous.

"Leave that till I'm gone," he says, kind of choking. "If it wasn't for these damn boils I should never have parted with her or the station." Then after another nip he takes his bag of money, and calls out to the Kanakas at the porch to carry his two chests down to the boat that was laying there ready to take him aboard. He ups as though to kiss the girl good-by, but she sprang back from him, as fierce as she had been with me—fiercer, I guess; and when he caught her she turned away her head like she hated him. Then he swore and stumbled out of the house without another word or anything, while me and the girl stood side by side, both of us in our different ways deserted, and slung together by the fate of things. She didn't fight this time when I made free with her again, but began to sob like her heart would break, while I squeezed and cuddled her and watched the sinking topsails of the Ransom.

Women are always alike at bottom; it is only men that are different. A bit of finery would make Rosie happy for a week. Her hair was an everlasting job, so was her skin, which she kept out of the sun and rubbed down very careful with oil. She took walks to see how the other women wore the single bushy garment that they do in the Gilberts,

the fashion varying from time to time: now it is swung very jaunty from side to side, now it's low and now it's high, and sometimes it's thick and sometimes it's thin, and sometimes the modest-and-quiet is the dressy way of it. She took care of the house very nice, and what few clothes and things we had were arranged most tidy in three chests with bell locks. I never hear a little bell ting-a-ling to-day but what it brings those days back to me, with her so busy at our funny housekeeping. When I coasted around the island, trading, she 'ud stay behind and guard the place like a bulldog, and never took a thing except a little soap or tobacco or maybe a tin of meat for her Pa, a nosing old gentleman dressed in a mat, who always bobbed up when I was out of the way, being discouraged at other times from living and dying with us.

Yes, I got very fond of her—loved her, you might call it, for all she was a little savage, and ate squid, and carried a shark-tooth dagger against any of the girls that might show a fancy for me. In time I taught her to play cribbage and checkers and dominoes, so that at night we would sit very sociable under the lamp, she and I, with the surf groaning on the outer reef, and it was more like a home than I'd ever had in my wandering, lonely, up-and-down life. She was quick to learn, and loving to beat the band, yet ever kind of imperious and saucy like I belonged to her instead of its being the other way around.

She had no idea of white people—used to say they looked like Kanakas who had been drowned for a week—and was most scornful how it was always copra, copra, copra with us. It was just her way to tease me and make me cross, for then she would snuggle up and ripple over with laughter and hold me tight in her soft, round girlish arms, and say that I was *her* copra—a whole ship of it, and how she 'ud hang herself from a coconut tree if I were to die—and by God, she would have done it, too, them Gilbert women being great on love, and the thing happening often enough.

Several years passed, and I can't recall a single word of disagreement between us. She was all the world to me in those days, and I doubt if in the whole group there was a pair so happy. Ben's Rosie, they called her—the captains and supercargoes and mates that came our way—and they all thought a lot of her, and brought her many a little present that made her eyes sparkle—such pretty eyes as they were, and so full of fun—gold fish, and rolls of silk, and music boxes or a trade hat. It was always a standing joke that she was tired of me, and was going to run away with them; and if they were quite old, like Captain Smith or Billy Baker, there wasn't any length she wouldn't go to, even to hugging them and playing with their whiskers right before me, and saying in her sweet, broken English: "Oh, you poor old captain, with nobody to love you

—but never mind, I go with you this time, sure I go, and Bennie can get a girl from Big Muggin, oh, so pretty, who bite him like a dog!"

Then little Ben came, and for a time it looked as though he was going to be quite a boy, and grow up. But at the end of twenty-one months, as he was nearing his second birthday, he sickened and died; and we dressed him up in his poor little best, and put him away forever in the coral. Rosie took on about it terrible—so terrible that I think something must have broken in her brain. She was never the same afterwards; not that she was always mourning, I don't mean that—but she grew cranky and queer and changed in every way. She would start into a fury at a word, and throw things about, and scream. She would tell the most awful lies about how I had treated her, and invent things that never took place. Even on a dot of a coral island there is gossip and slander and a Kanaka Mrs. Grundy, and Rosie was doing her best to ruin me, so that I was avoided, and the King and the other high muck-a-mucks went to Tyson's, the opposition trader, and tabooed my store till I didn't know which way to turn.

I ought to have sold out and quit, and left Rosie on the other fellow like Feltenshaw had done me. But I loved her for what she had been to me, and for the poor mite moldering under ground, and so just took my medicine for a whole miserable year and let it go at that. Every misfortune I've had in

life I seem to trace to what was good and generous in me. Certainly if I'd shaken her off then and there, I would have been a happier man, and been saved things that have since almost drove me mad.

The upshot of it was that finally I did sell the station to a couple of Chinamen—brothers—and I would like to say right here there never was a whiter pair than these two, or any that stood up straighter to a bargain. Once the main price was fixed, there was no haggling over valuations, nor any backwardness or suspicion, though in the rush I was in not to hold the schooner over long, it would have been easy to beat me out of a hundred dollars or two. They pulled us off to the vessel—me and Rosie and them three camphor-wood chests with the bell locks and a big roll of mats and a keg of silver dollars—and an hour later six years of my life had sunk with the palms, as lost and disappeared as the schooner's wake in the sea behind us.

After the Line Apia struck me as a wonderfully bustling, busy little place, and I took to it like a man does who's had nothing but coral and coconuts to look at till all the world seems nothing else. It came over me what a prisoner I'd been up there, and how much I had paid in unthought-of ways for that keg of Chile money. Rosie, too, brightened up considerable with the novelty of it all, and was so gay and laughing and like her old self that I was gladder than ever at having made the change.

It didn't take me long to size up conditions; and the better part of that keg soon put me in possession of a two-story house and store in the center of the town on the main street, with a pretty good stock taken over from the widow of the man who had lately died there. I was hardly what could be called a trader any more, what with a place so big and fine, with a tramway running down to a shaky wharf, and a busted bookkeeper coming in every Tuesday night to post my books. I was a South Sea merchant now, and was reaping the fruit of all them lonely slaving days on the Line. No more pajamas neither, but a clean, white suit every day, and with Rosie perking up like she did, them were real good times for me, and pleasant to look back on; and though I do say it myself, my neighbors liked me and I was respected and looked up to, and I was called the Gilbert Island Cousul from the way I was always ready to befriend anybody from there, whether white or native, even once going before the Supreme Court and being complimented by the Chief Justice on behalf of some Nonootch people whose wages were being held back.

Then my ward run me for the Municipal Council, and I was elected by twenty-two votes to four over Grevsmuhl; and I can tell you it made me feel a mighty proud man to be honored like that and placed so high; and if my head didn't swell I guess my heart did, to almost bursting, at such a rise in life, and one so unexpected and undreamed of. It

hardly seemed it could be me the police touched their caps to, or the consuls confabbed with about local affairs as they dropped in to buy a toothbrush or a pair of socks—me who had landed there so short a time before in my pajamas and kind of dazed at the size and noise of the place after the silence of the Line—just common old me, with earrings in my ears and gaping like a Rube.

It meant a big uplift to me in every kind of a way, and I was a better man for all that confidence and trust, and wanted like hell to show I was worth it. The week after I was elected to the Council I married Rosie proper and right, thinking a Councillor ought to set an example in his community; and every one was very cordial to me about it, especially in my own ward, where two or three of them even followed my lead, saying that with the mail steamers now calling and the town generally on the up grade, it was time to let go on the old, wrong way of things, and get into line with civilization.

Whether it was the change from the coral islands or the lavish new diet or what, Rosie had been laying on flesh for a long time in a quiet, unnoticed kind of way till finally she suddenly plumped up like a balloon. My, but she grew something awful, a waddling, monstrous mountain of a woman, with her eyes burying like a pig's, and the whole of her shaking as she walked. She was ashamed to go out any more except by night, sulking all day

indoors, instead, and rocking in a hammock. As I said before, she'd never been right since Benny's death, and though she had pulled up for a time and acted very much improved she slumped at last, and slumped worse than she ever had been. Her old surly fits on the Line were nothing compared with the rampageous way she went on now, and if there was ever a she devil on earth or a man driven plumb distracted it was Rosie and me in our splendid house.

When she was taken with those spells of hers she was nothing less than a cursing, snarling, foaming maniac, and stopped at nothing to make me a spectacle and a byword. Again and again she chased me out with an ax; she would fling into the store with nothing over her but a single dirty garment, and pull down whole shelves of stuff out of sheer devilment, screaming with rage. She slandered everybody, and reflected on every woman who was unfortunate enough to know us, so that I was sued twice for defamation—or rather she—with verdict and damages, all that I could do being to hold up my hands and tell the judge she wasn't answerable for her actions. Hell, that was what it was—straight, unadulterated hell—with no way out that I could see till I died or she.

It was about this time I began to notice a fellow named Tyne on the beach—a thin, tall, hungry-looking man in a derby hat, very shabby black clothes, and no socks—who was said to be a busted

doctor landed off of a French bark. His name came up before the Council, but as he had no papers or diplomas to show, and was hazy besides where he came from and how, we refused to let him practice, and were insulted besides at his daring to ask us.

Well, one day this Tyne, he comes into my store, very hang-dog, and so famished and shaky that I couldn't but feel sorry for him, and he asks for the job of pushing my handcart around the beach, getting stuff out of Customs, and making deliveries—he having heard I had fired my Nieue boy for pilfering.

"Fifty cents a day, Doc," I says. "It's hardly fit for a white man."

"My God," he says, in a real gentleman's voice, "I'm starving. I'd push anything anywhere for a bite of bread and a corner of a shed to sleep in. Ain't there a spark of charity in this town for a white man who is down on his uppers?"

I answered him with a can of sardines and some pilot break, which he went out and wolfed right there on the front stoop, and then came back wanting to know where was the cart and what was he to do? This was first how we got acquainted, Doc and me; and a remarkably finely educated man he was, too, and I don't doubt for a minute all that he represented himself. I fixed up a small shed for him with some mats, a tin basin and a lamp; and after a day or two, seeing how willing he worked and how faithful in spite of every one staring at a white man between

the shafts, I let him take his meals regular with me and Rosie like one of the family.

For all he was down and out, and trundled my things about the beach like a donkey, in knowledge and everything he was miles above me and I knew it —and he made it plain he knew it, too. He was not at all a genial man, but had a rasping, bitter way about him, and a tongue as sharp as a razor, and a line of talk as to how the world was made up of flats and sharpers, all of them hypocrites, and how there wasn't but one sin—and that was to be found out. He talked like the devil might be expected to talk, there being no goodness or honor anywhere; and in some ways he wasn't unlike him in looks as generally represented, being tall and thin, with keen gray eyes that seemed to bore right through you, and a wicked, sneering mouth like a slit across his face.

Very soon he was doctoring natives on the sly for quarters and half dollars and bonito hooks and tappa, and quite a row of bottles and drug-store stuff began to accumulate along the ledges of the shed walls. I didn't think it was my business to interfere as long as he let white people alone, besides feeling sorry for him, and appreciating the way he paid no attention to Rosie's outbreaks, sitting there like he was air, and not passing a single remark—being, for all his faults, a gentleman through and through. At last he chucked the handcart altogether, though he went on messing with me and living in my shed, his

Kanaka practice growing very extensive. It grew and grew till finally the regular doctor called a halt, and he was warned in an official letter, and told he would get three months' imprisonment if he persisted. At this I thought he would go back to the shafts again, though I didn't care to propose it lest it should hurt his feelings. But instead he bought an accordion and did nothing but play and play on it for days, beginning awful bad like he didn't know one end of it from another, but improving wonderful till it was dandy to hear him.

I guess there was nothing Doc couldn't do if he tried, though why accordion was more than I could answer. But it wasn't loafing that kept him stuffed in a hot shed all day, wheezing polkas out of the hurdy-gurdy, but a real good idea of improving on the handcart. What if he didn't make a whole band out of himself, with a harness holding a comb across his mouth, and a bass drum for him to kick with one foot and a tambourine to frisk with the other. My, when he started off with "The Stars and Stripes Forever" you might have thought he was six, with a drum major prancing along in front! He give a demonstration that night in the Tivoli Hotel, and drew the town; and when he come home it was with a pocketful of silver and a couple of dates for a wedding and the Kaiser's birthday.

After that Doc became an institution, with a pretty Kanaka girl to carry the drum and pass round

the saucer; and every night when he hadn't a special engagement he would make the round of the bars, picking up what little he could. If there was a ship to be sold at auction, or a public meeting to protest against a high-handed something, it got to be the fashion to plaster the notice of it on Doc's back, him playing under a tree for all he was worth with the sweat pouring down his face, while all hands turned out to see what was the rumpus. He made money hand over fist, and would have paid for his keep only I wouldn't have it. We had grown to be sort of friends, him and me, from both having so much to bear—for he was too proud and highly educated a man to like making a monkey of himself, and it ground into him hard, and with me it was Rosie, Rosie, Rosie.

Oh, God, what things I had to put up with! What endless mortifications! What everlasting, heartbreaking scenes and scandals! She got to following me to Council meetings, bellowing like a wildcat, and clawing the policeman who was ordered to put her out; and again and again I had to leave in the middle to try and get her home, half the beach tagging along with us, laughing and jeering till I could have died of shame.

The day I resigned from the Council, being unable to stand it any longer, I was sitting in the front room, with my head in my hands, when Doc came in, and patted me on the back.

"Too bad," he says, "too bad."

"Oh, Doc," I says, "I'm the most miserable chap alive."

"It's bound to end some time," he remarked.

I shook my head. We had no means of taking care of lunatics, and that was about what Rosie was. The Colonies all had laws, barring out undesirables and such, even if a steamer would have taken her, which none of them would. "I'll tell you what I'd do," said Doc. "I'd give five hundred dollars to a labor-ship captain, put her aboard at night, and leave it to him to land her in one of those islands where they eat you for dinner."

"I couldn't do that," I said.

"Too fond of your money, eh?" he sneers.

"Oh, Doc," I answered, "I'd give everything I possess, lock, stock and barrel—and ten years of my life thrown in—to be decently quit of her."

He smiled a bit incredulous. "Suppose an angel came down from heaven and took you at your word," he says. "The next day you'd be beating Mr. Angel out of his price—you know you would, and screaming worse than she does at being held to your bargain."

"Perhaps I would, Doc," I agreed, his manner of speaking somehow making it feel very real; "it's hard to begin without a dollar and nothing but the clothes you stand in. But downstairs in my safe I have two thousand dollars in hard cash, American

money, which the angel could take and welcome."

"That's a lot of money," he says, wondering like, "but it would be worth it to you, wouldn't it?"

"My God, yes," I says, rather regretting I told him about the safe, for there was a shine in his eyes and a calculating look I didn't like.

"And you wouldn't bilk the angel when he handed in his bill?" he went on.

"Oh, hell, Doc," I said, "what's the use of talking of angels? I've just got to grin and bear it."

"But you'd pay, wouldn't you?" he persisted.

I said yes, just to stop his pestering; and after a couple of drinks off of the sideboard he went away. That evening I locked myself in the store, took the money out of the safe, and carried it up to the attic where I hid it under an old mattress. I smeared a little varnish around the combination lock with a rag, and next day I looked for finger marks, but there weren't none. Yet I was still suspicious, and the money stayed in the attic. Doc was too bright a man to have left home without a reason.

"Things went on as usual for a long time—business middling, Doc rounding up the bars, Rosie raising Cain occasionally, or snarling and muttering in the hammock just as the humor took her. It was the damnedest life for a man to lead, just pigging it and worse every day, with no order and anything—a can of meat for lunch, a can of meat for dinner, and the table left slovenly like it was. Then she fell

kind of sick, and though I felt sorry to see her doubled up and groaning, it had a good side to it, for I got a Chinaman in to cook at forty dollars a month, and he straightened things out fine and cleaned up the dirt of ages. I called in Doctor Funk, the regular physician, and for a time Rosie improved, getting well enough to nearly bite the cook's finger off when he tried to stop her giving away a consignment of hams. But after a while she took sick again, the cramps coming back worse than ever, and I let Doc do what he could for her, which wasn't much, though better than Funk, whose stuff didn't seem any more good and had lost its effect.

Finally, early one morning, she was taken most awful bad, vomiting blood, and twisting and twitching in a way horrible to see, she being so mountainous fat, and gibbering crazily in the Gilbert language —all about me and little Benny, and devils snapping at her toes, and a giant squid what was dragging her down to drown. Then of a sudden she grew very quiet, and Doc, looking close to her face, said, "Good God, she is dead!" Yes, dead, just as Doctor Funk hurried in, glaring to see Doc there, and saying something out loud about God damn quacks, and looking and smelling savagely at the different bottles. Doc slunk out of sight, and then Funk, he calmed down, and spoke to me very sympathetic and kind as to what I was to do, and how, after all, it was a merciful release.

I buried her the same day, that being the rule in the tropics, and the better part of the town followed her to the grave in the foreign cemetery, that being a kind of rule or custom, too, in Apia, as well as everybody getting tight afterwards at the Tivoli bar.

It was a strange feeling to come back to the house and to know that Rosie was gone out of it forever, and that I had passed another big landmark in my life. For all it was such a release, I was bluer than blue, yet I won't deny I was glad, too, but in a frightened kind of way, and half wishing again and again that she was back. Her running on about Benny and me before she died stuck in my throat, and seemed awful pitiful; and I remembered how pretty she once had been, and always such a good, true wife, and how me and the little store was all the world to her before sorrow broke her heart.

I went upstairs, and sat looking out on the bay, thinking it all over, and how in time death comes to every one of us, high or low; thinking, too, that I was a free man now—a prosperous, respected, looked-up-to man, and an ex-Councillor with a home that many a woman would consider well worth sharing. I wondered if Miss Nelson up at the Mission would consider a man as unrefined as I was and thirty-seven years old, she so sweet and young and with such gentle, winning ways. She was a governess to their children, and that made me think she

would, for no woman likes to be a dependent and at the beck and call of another. I sat there dreaming of her, and of the place nicely fixed up, and of us driving out of a Sunday to Vailele in a smart little buggy, with me reëlected to the Council, and people saying: "How d'ye do, won't you drop in a moment?"—to me and Miss Nelson, married.

If this sounds wrong, remember Rosie had been no wife to me for three years—only a torment and a disgrace—and I deserved some credit for having stood it like I did. I had never dared have such thoughts before, though I'd often remarked what a pretty creature Miss Nelson was, just like a man does without anything further in his head. Yet looking back on it, and the few times she had been in the store when we had spoken together, I kind of felt she liked me, and she had certainly never been in any hurry to leave; with this much to go on, and the fact that she always smiled at me most winsome the few times we passed each other on the street, I couldn't help thinking I had made a start without my knowing it, and that if I followed it up hard this dream of her and me might be made to come true.

I was turning this over in my mind when a squall of rain came tearing along, the sky all black with it, and the roof hammering like a boiler factory. In Samoa you needn't look out of the window to see if it is raining. It comes down deafening, and the iron roars with the weight and smash of it. This

was how I didn't notice Doc till he stood right there beside me. There was something awful strange and grave about him, and I give a little jump I was that taken by surprise.

He lit a cigar, and waited very impatient for the squall to pass; and as he went to the window and beat a little tattoo on it with his finger nail, I noticed he was all dressed up like I'd never seen him before. Then he came back, looking at me very steadfast, and says: "Well, Ben, you're out of the woods at last."

"Yes, thank the Lord!" says I.

"Same here," he says, meaning himself. "When the mail comes in to-night, I'm off to San Francisco."

"Why, Doc!" I cried out, utterly flabbergasted.

"Yes," he says, "and for all I care, the whole damned island may sink in the sea, and stay there, with nothing but coconuts and my old accordion to mark the place and maybe one of the wheels of that bloody handcart."

I was still knocked silly.

"But, Doc," I says, "you can't have enough to pay your passage."

Then he laughs.

"A hundred and seventy-five ain't much out of two thousand," he says.

"Two thousand?" I says, more mystified than ever.

"Yes," he answers, facing me square. "The two thousand that you owe me, Mr. Ben."

I was just going to answer I didn't owe him nothing when the words stopped midway on my tongue. I began to tremble instead—tremble till my hands could hardly hold to my chair, till I couldn't keep my mouth from dribbling.

"It's a debt of honor," he went on. "You can repudiate it if you want to, and snap your fingers in my face, but I trusted you, I got you out of your mess, and now I ask you for my money."

I couldn't answer anything, but looked at him speechless while he goes to the door, peeks outside of it very careful lest any one might be listening, and then comes tiptoeing back. It was so plain what he meant to tell me that I managed to cry out, "No, no," and shook worse nor ever.

"You're a straight man, Ben," he says. "What you owe, you pay. I wouldn't have risked it if I had had any doubt about that."

I stumbled to the sideboard, poured myself out a big drink, never minding what I spilled, and then went up to the attic where the bag of money was still lying under the old mattress. I brought it down and give it to him, only asking him not to count it as that was more than I could bear.

He made a grab for it, never saying a word, and as he went out of the doorway that was the last I ever saw of him.

Was I a fool to have paid him? Was it all a bluff, and just his hellish ingeniousness for turning

everything to account? Funk never questioned she had died a natural death. Yet true or untrue, paying Doc that two thousand dollars made me a murderer. In the bottom of my heart I believe he did it, and there are nights when I wake up in a sweat of horror. But wouldn't it have been a dirty act to bilk him of his money, all the more as it would have been so easy? To this day I don't know whether I ought to have paid or not, though if I hadn't it would have lightened my conscience of a frightful load. But when I think that I always see him closing the door and tiptoeing back, ready to whisper the truth.

If it was the truth.

Well, what would you have done?

THE END